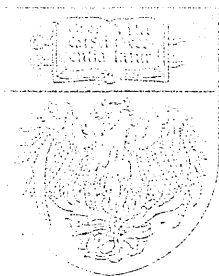


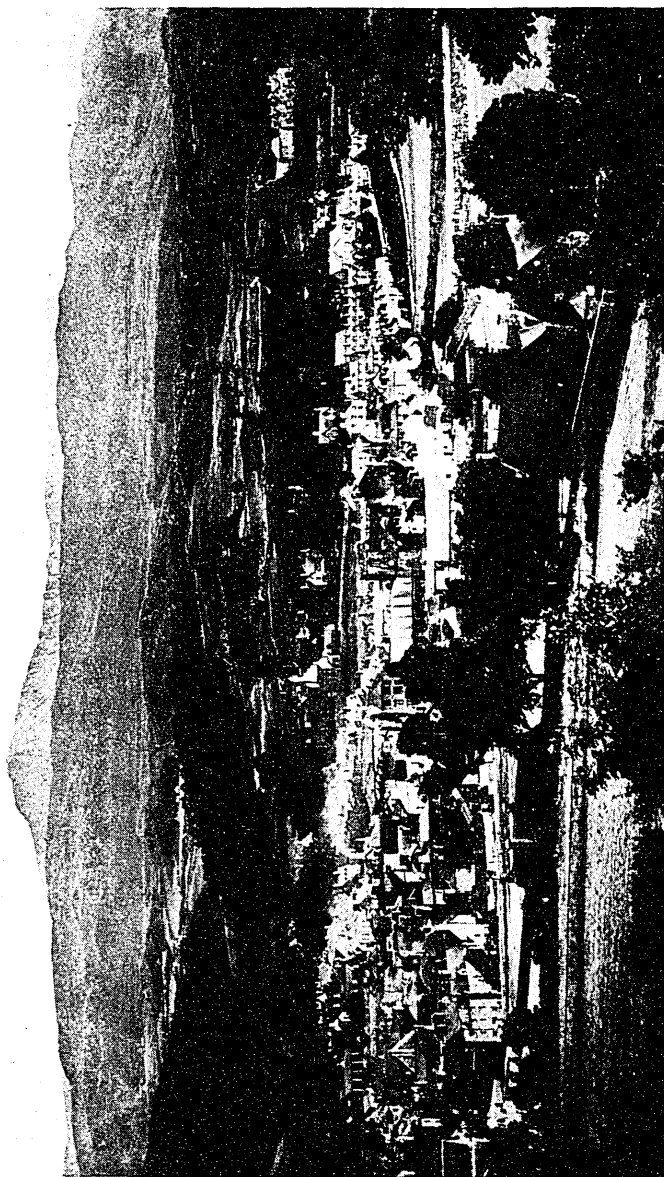
University of Chicago
Library





THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
IN MODERN WALES





DOLGELLEY

The uppermost building on the right is the Carmelite Convent.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN MODERN WALES

A Record of the Past Century

BY

DONALD ATTWATER

Author of 'Father Ignatius of Llanthony'

'I am persuaded that, happen what may, no other race than this and no other tongue than this of Wales will answer for this little corner of the earth at the great day of Judgement.'

An old man at Pencader, in 1163

LONDON

BURNS OATES & WASHBOURNE LTD.

PUBLISHERS TO THE HOLY SEE

BX 1509

. A8

NIHIL OBSTAT:

INNOCENTIUS APAP, S.Th.M., O.P.,
Censor deputatus.

IMPRIMATUR:

✠ JOSEPH BUTT,
Vicar Capitular.

WESTMONASTERII,
die 7 Februarii, 1935.

MADE AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
FOR
BURNS OATES & WASHBOURNE LTD.
1935

Disc.

1514498

CYFLWYNEDIG ER COF

AM

LEWIS HAVARD

HENRI HUGHES

PEDR LEWIS

IOAN HUW JONES

PAWL HOOK

OFFEIRIAID EGLWYS LÂN RHUFAIN

A

CHARWYR CYMRU

PREFACE

THE writing of this short book has been a task of great difficulty, owing to the sources being scattered and generally unordered ; moreover, some of them are of uncertain reliability and contradict one another. I therefore put it forward with the utmost diffidence ; indeed, it may well prove that its only value will be to spur someone else, with more time and better qualified than myself, to do the job properly and in more detail. There is plenty still to be done on every phase of the post-Reformation history of the Church in Wales, many sources yet to be explored or even discovered, *e.g.*, that Welsh manuscript account of the Havards of Senni which Father Lewis Havard junior is supposed to have taken with him to Lisbon in 1871.

There is no need of apology for the space I have given to times outside my term of reference—the past century : I have but to quote the Welsh saying, *Tyf yr hyn sydd o'r hyn fu* : “ What is grows from what was.” And I may as well say here, once for all, that when I say Wales I always include Monmouthshire, which is still a part of Wales whatever it may be officially ; similarly, when I speak of the diocese of Newport or the archdiocese of Cardiff I do not include Herefordshire—

though its western parishes are peppered with Welsh place-names.

For very much of the matter contained in this book I am indebted to the published researches of others, and among them I cannot do less than name the volumes of the Catholic Record Society and Dom Anselm Wilson's *Life of Bishop Hedley*. My gratitude for generous help is specially due to his Lordship the Bishop of Menevia, to Canon W. F. Finucane, of Brecon, and to Dom Stephen Sheehy, of Belmont. I must also thank the following for information, advice, and other assistance: the Archbishop of Cardiff; the Abbot of Ampleforth; Peter F. Anson; the Rev. F. Terrell Brown, Llanarth; Canon Richard Burke, Holywell; the Prior of Caldey; the Rev. Herbert J. Canneaux; J. Herbert Canning, O.B.E., K.C.S.G.; the Editor of the *Catholic Herald*; Father Edmund, C.P., Dublin; Father Germain, C.P., Carmarthen; the Rev. J. P. Geraghty, Caernarfon; the Rev. Eric Green, Dolgelley; Canon D. J. Hannon, Cardiff; Dafydd Havard, Ystradgynlais; Father Leo Hicks, S.J.; Parch Gwilym Lewis, Aber; the Rev. Oswald Lofthouse, Bangor; the Rev. Michael McGrath, M.A., Aberystwyth; Miss Gwenllian Morgan, M.A., Brecon; R. E. Morgan, Machynlleth; the Rev. John Mostyn, K.M., Ph.D., D.C.L., Haverfordwest; the Librarian of the National Library of Wales; Robert Owen, Welshpool; Thomas Powell, Machynlleth; the Prior of Prinknash; Canon Denis Quigley, Barry Dock; Dom John P. Saillour, O.S.B.;

Dom A. Placid Smith, O.S.B. ; the Abbess of Talacre ;
Father G. M. Trébaol, O.M.I. ; Major C. J. Vaughan,
O.B.E., D.L., J.P. ; Sir Harry Lloyd Verney, K.C.V.O. ;
Father Victor, O.S.F.C., Pantasaph ; Brother Vincent,
Cong. Orat. ; the Rev. Arthur Wade-Evans ; the
Editor of the *Western Mail* ; Dom Basil Whelan,
O.S.B. ; Father Daniel Wilkinson, O.M.I. ; Father
Benedict Zimmerman, O.D.C.

D. A.

September 11, 1934.

Feast of St. Deiniol, bishop in Arfon.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
	PREFACE	vii
I.	THE CHURCH BEFORE THE REFORMATION .	1
II.	THE CHURCH AFTER THE REFORMATION .	17
III.	THE OLD CENTRES	26
IV.	THE OLD FAMILIES	53
V.	THE WESTERN DISTRICT	66
VI.	THE WELSH DISTRICT	76
VII.	THE TWO DIOCESES	88
VIII.	THE TWO DIOCESES (<i>continued</i>)	107
IX.	THE SECOND WELSH VICARIATE	122
X.	TWO DIOCESES AGAIN	129
XI.	THE WELSH PROVINCE	146
XII.	THE WELSH PROVINCE (<i>continued</i>)	160
XIII.	THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS	169
XIV.	THE CONTEMPLATIVE NUNS	197
XV.	THE CONVERSION OF WALES	210
	APPENDICES	229
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	234

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

DOLGELLEY AND THE CARMELITE CONVENT	<i>Frontispiece</i>
DOM J. C. HEDLEY, BISHOP OF NEWPORT	FACING PAGE 108
THE ARCHBISHOP OF CARDIFF	126
THE BISHOP OF MENEVIA	164

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN MODERN WALES

CHAPTER I

THE CHURCH BEFORE THE REFORMATION

THE known history of what we now call Wales begins in the middle of the first century of the Christian era with the conquest of Britannia by the Romans. The island was then inhabited by a number of distinct nations, the Brigantes, Catuvelauni, Durotriges, *etc.*; in "Wales", the Ordovices, Silures, Demetae. The origins and pre-history of these peoples are subject only of speculation, not of certain knowledge, and the distinguishing names given to them by ethnographers (Iberians, Goidels, *etc.*) are purely fictitious; it is not known that they had any generic name or names. Nor is it known what language or languages they spoke, though it is reasonably inferred that they used forms of what linguistic scholars now call Keltic speech. (Nevertheless, though the words Kelt and Keltic are very convenient as labels, the fashion of using them in racial, literary, and other controversies is a piece of silliness on a level with the Nazis and their "Aryanism"). In what is now England these Romano-Britons were subsequently amalgamated with and overlaid (but not destroyed) by various Teutonic tribes ("the Saxons"), in parts

2 THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN MODERN WALES

of the country by Norsemen and Danes, and in part by the Norman-French. Not so in Wales (and Cornwall), where to this day the people are substantially the pre-Roman stock. And the contemporary Welsh not only represent the earliest-known peoples of England, the "Ancient Britons" of old-fashioned speech, they also represent the Roman Empire in a way that the English, as such, do not. Between the Wales of to-day and the Britain of Severus, of Magnus Maximus (Macsen Wledig), of Ambrosius Aurelianus (Emrys Wledig), of Verulamium, Eburacum, and Isca of the Legion, there is organic and unbroken continuity; between England and Roman Britain there lies a dark age of barbarism wherein Roman civilization was destroyed and Christianity with it, when the Britons were a subject people and the English conceived but not yet born.

We acknowledge as much whenever we refer to our neighbours as Welshmen, for the word comes from the Old English *waelisc*, meaning "foreign" and especially Roman; the Britons of Cornwall and of Strathclyde were also called Welsh, but not the Picts or Irish, who had never been romanized.* They appear to have taken to calling themselves, as at present, *Cymry* (sing., *Cymro*), meaning "fellow-countrymen", slowly some time about the tenth century. Before that they were simply Britons. The origin and meaning of the name *Britannia* (in modern Welsh *Prydain*) are not certain; it may contain a reference to the white cliffs of the south-east coast.

In the year 43 of our era, during the reign of the Emperor Claudius, the Romans began the systematic

* Cf., the German use of *Wälschland* for Italy.

subjugation of Britain ; by 78, when Julius Agricola definitively reduced Môn (which we call Anglesey), the task was complete. For the next three hundred years and more Britain was a province of the Roman Empire. The date of the introduction of Christianity into Britain in general and Wales in particular is not known, but the little indirect evidence there is on the subject encourages the belief that it was early. It is reasonable to suppose that there were soon baptized persons among the Romans, troops and others who were stationed about the country in towns and fortresses from Richborough to Caernarfon and from Exeter to Corbridge, and among the many traders who came from Gaul. It is true that St. Irenaeus in 176, enumerating the western nations to which Christianity had penetrated, makes no mention of Britain ; on the other hand Tertullian, only some thirty years later, uses words in his treatise against the Jews that imply not merely that the gospel had reached the Britons but that it had made much headway in their country. The martyrdom of SS. Alban, Julius, and Aaron is the first landmark, but not a very clear one, for neither the places nor time of their passion are incontrovertibly certain. It is probable that they were put to death in the persecutions of either Decius (251-2) or Valerian (257-9). Later ages have consecrated the belief that Alban was the first martyr of these islands and suffered at Verulamium, where is now the city called Saint Albans. We are told that Julius and Aaron were citizens of Caerleon, and therefore they probably suffered there.

The year after the profession of Christianity was made lawful by Constantine the Great, namely, in 314, a great ecclesiastical council was held at Arles. At

4 THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN MODERN WALES

least five Britons were present, three bishops, a priest, and a deacon, for their names have come down to us. There were also British bishops at the Council of Rimini in 359, and three of them were so poor that they accepted the hospitality of the Emperor Constantius, who was an Arian. But that Britain remained free from this heresy is vouched for by its great opponent, St. Athanasius himself. Christianity made great strides and spread throughout the land from the peace of the Church until the final withdrawal of the Roman legions in 406, and after that date until there began those incursions of Teutonic barbarians that eventually enslaved the Britons and destroyed their church, first in the eastern half of the country and then to the Severn. We know that early in the fifth century the British Church was corrupted by the Pelagian heresy,* and that twice, in 429 and about 447, St. Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, came on a mission against it; the west country is full of traces of his zeal and influence.

While the eastern part of Britain was slowly and painfully becoming England, the land of the "Anglo-Saxons" or, better, "Anglo-Britons", that part of the country which we now call Wales (only rather more of it) remained British, Roman, and Christian. The monastic movement, which had begun probably soon after the year 388, developed and flourished and promoted a revival of religion that touched the remotest corners of the country.† Among the saints who lived and laboured in the fifth and sixth centuries were

* Pelagianism principally denied the doctrines of original sin and of the necessity of grace for salvation. Pelagius seems to have himself been a Briton; his name in modern Welsh would be Morien (not Morgan).

† British monasticism was of the Gallic kind, whose patriarch was St. Martin of Tours (d. 397).

Illyd, "the Knight", whose chief foundation was at Llanilltyd Fawr (Llantwit Major, in Glamorgan); Dyfrig (Dubricius, the "high saint") at Hentland and Moccas in Herefordshire; David (Dewi) at Mynyw, in the extreme west of Pembrokeshire;* Samson, who was abbot on Caldey Island and died a bishop in Brittany; Gildas the Wise, who was a solitary on an island in the Severn Sea and again near Ruys in Morbihan Bay, and denounced the iniquities of five contemporary British kings in a letter that still survives; Teilo, born near Tenby and abbot at Llandeilo Fawr; Cybi at Caergybi, called Holyhead in English; Padarn, who founded Llanbadarn Fawr by Aberystwyth and was the first abbot of Ynys Enlli (Bardsey); Cadog, whose headquarters were at Nantcarfan, not far from Cardiff; Deiniol (Daniel), founder of the two Bangors, on the Menai and on the Dee; Tysilio at Meifod, the great church of Powys; and Beuno, whose best known centre was at Clynnog, the master of St. Gwenfrewi (Winefride).† Of these saints St. David was by no means the most influential, but his memory was given a fictitious importance when Wales was trying to throw off the metropolitan jurisdiction of Canterbury in the twelfth century, and so he came to be regarded as patron-saint of the country.

It is sometimes said that the church of the Britons or Welsh (and of the Irish) at this time, almost entirely cut off from Rome by circumstances, represented a sort of primitive Protestantism and an independent national

* From here, Whitesand Bay, St. Patrick sailed for Ireland in 432. He was a Romano-Britain, born we know not where.

† The feasts of SS. David, Teilo, Cadog, Samson, Illyd, Dyfrig, Deiniol, Beuno, and Winefride are now observed in Wales. Also of SS. Alban, Julius and Aaron, Germanus, and Asaph, and, with very much less reason, of SS. Kentigern and Lucius.

6 THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN MODERN WALES

church. It is sufficient to quote two non-Catholic scholars on this head. "All these notions (and some more like them) are foreign to the Welsh tradition. For Welshmen and Irishmen alike believed in One Church only, Universal, the Catholic Church, 'in the world but not of it', which had begun at Jerusalem, but had its centre at Rome" (the Rev. A. W. Wade-Evans). "From the second century to the sixteenth, Wales adhered to the Old Faith as rigidly as Italy and Spain in the nineteenth" (the Rev. Hartwell Jones).

The Welsh Church had its proper liturgy (in Latin) and differed from Roman usage in several matters of discipline. It had, of course, its bishops, but they almost certainly had no clearly delimited territorial dioceses before the eleventh century. The Laws of Howel the Good (Hywel Dda; d. 950) give a list of seven monasteries that once had resident bishops, of which the chief, Mynyw (Saint Davids), still had one. It is evident from the same Laws that complete divorce in marriage was recognized and practised—a common abuse in early times.*

In 597 St. Augustine, sent by Pope St. Gregory the Great, began the conversion of the pagan English. The Pope also "committed the care of all the bishops of Britain" to the missionary, who had, however, been consecrated with the title of "Archbishop of the English". There is evidence that this jurisdiction (whatever extent was intended) was a personal concession only, and that it was so is the opinion of Dr. Plummer, the editor of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*. The situation was difficult, and it looks as if St.

* At this date and in so remote a country as Wales marriage of the "secular" clergy can hardly be considered an abuse. Not so the marriage of bishops, which was not unknown in Wales even so late as the eleventh century.

Augustine handled it clumsily. He had two conferences with the British bishops and abbots. There was no suggestion that the Welsh Church was doctrinally unorthodox or out of Catholic communion, but Augustine regarded its disciplinary peculiarities as "against the unity of the Church".* The Welshmen, on the other hand, feared to be in subjection to this stranger. Accordingly, when he asked them to keep Easter according to the Roman computation, to amend their baptismal rite, and to join with him in converting the heathen English, they refused, adding, "Nor will we receive you as our archbishop." Without doubt their attitude was excessively unconciliatory, but that does not justify the bullying threats with which Augustine then assailed them.

The result was an access of ill-feeling and a feud between the English and Welsh churches, which Augustine's successor St. Lawrence precipitated in Ireland and Scotland as well. The dispute raged principally round the date of Easter and, so far as Wales is concerned, it lasted till 768, when a young Welsh bishop called Elfodd (Elbodugus) induced his countrymen to come into line with Roman usage. But in spite of pressure from England the Welsh Church did not abandon its own loose organization and accept the jurisdiction of Canterbury for another three hundred years.† Nevertheless, "the loyalty of the

* An early example of the error, common to-day, of confusing unity in faith and communion with uniformity of liturgical and other accidental practices.

† Crockford's *Clerical Directory* gives a perfectly fantastic hierarchy to pre-Norman Wales, with Patriarchs of Prydain Celtaidd and Archbishops of Caerleon, Patriarchs of the Realm of Venodotia, Exarchs of Gwynedd, Archbishops of Menevia and Primates of Wales, and Prelates Metropolitan! Of course no such offices existed.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN MODERN WALES

Welsh to the See of St. Peter is not in question ; their churches had many peculiarities, the result of their previous history, but these were not challenged by the papal power, which found its commands as readily obeyed in Wales as in other western regions " (J. E. Lloyd).

At the time when the Normans conquered England there were four Welsh bishops of superior importance : he who had his headquarters at the monastery of St. David in Mynyw, one in the north at St. Deiniol's monastery at Bangor in Arfon, another (probably representing St. Dyfrig) whose centre was in Erging (Archenfield, along the Herefordshire border), and another at the monastery of Llanbadarn Fawr.*

A temporary success for the Norman arms in North Wales paved the way for the appointment of a bishop of their own, Hervey, with his seat at one of these centres, namely Bangor. He was consecrated in 1092, and was the first bishop from Wales to attend an English synod, at Westminster in the same year. His flock did not like him—he was arrogant and "superior"†—and when he resorted to violence they chased him out ; he became the first bishop of Ely instead. After the death of the prince of the Deheubarth, Rhys ab Tewdwr, in 1093 the Normans overran southern Wales from Monmouth to Saint Davids. The archbishops of Canterbury had for some time been asserting themselves in Gwent and now, in 1107, Urban, who was called "bishop of Glamorgan", definitely put himself

* The present church at Llanbadarn is often referred to locally as "the cathedral". This is just sentimental romanticism.

† Still a standing complaint of the Welsh against the English in their country. Pope Pascal II wrote to St. Anselm of Canterbury that Hervey's appointment was barbarously and absurdly made—even though the people over whom he was set were barbarians !

under the jurisdiction of St. Anselm ; he began to build a cathedral at Llandaff, and the first reliable reference to a see and canonically organized diocese of that name appears in 1127. In 1115 Urban of Glamorgan took part in the consecration in London of a Norman, Bernard, as the first foreign bishop of Menevia (Mynyw) ; under his successor, David fitz Gerald, the title of the see was changed to Saint Davids. In 1143 the invaders centred at Rhuddlan castle obtained the erection of a see at Llanelwy, which they called Saint Asaph, and a Norman, Gilbert, was consecrated at Lambeth. His first successor was the romantic chronicler Geoffrey of Monmouth who, owing to the activities of Owain Gwynedd, never took over his diocese.

This capture of the Welsh ecclesiastical system and its reorganization on the lines usual in the rest of Europe was a heavy blow at Welsh independence ; it was, of course, accompanied by a certain plundering of ecclesiastical revenues and—what the Welsh found at least as hard to forgive—a contempt for the local saints, whose names were sometimes superseded in existing church dedications.

These four sees, Saint Davids, Bangor, Llandaff, and Saint Asaph, constituted the organization of the Church in Wales until the Reformation. Welsh occupants were in a minority, especially after the conquest by Edward I, but from time to time efforts were made to establish metropolitan status for Saint Davids in contempt of Canterbury. It was begun by the first Norman bishop himself, and was carried on by (among others) Gerald the Welshman (de Barry, Cambrensis). He pressed the claim with vigour and enterprise (he wanted to be archbishop himself) and went thrice to

Rome to see Pope Innocent III in person about it ; but in spite of a fight which Llywelyn the Great said would be remembered "as long as Wales should stand" he was not successful : Wales had to wait for its archbishop till 1916, when Pope Benedict XV did what Innocent III had refused to do.

The invaders did away with what was left of the old monastic system by breaking up the *clas*, *i.e.*, community, ecclesiastical organization which still represented it. When Bernard became bishop of Menevia he found a body of *claswyr* who enjoyed the revenues of the church of St. David in common ; he turned them into cathedral canons, each with his personal prebend. Some of such institutions were handed over to Norman religious as "cells" (*e.g.*, Llanbadarn Fawr to St. Peter's, Gloucester) and some were simply made parish churches impropriated to a monastery (*e.g.*, Llanilltyd Fawr to Tewkesbury), but a few in the north survived as sorts of colleges of secular canons (sometimes the portionaries and even "abbots" were laymen), such as Towyn in Merioneth, Llanrhaeadr ym Mochnant, Aberdaron, and Llanynys in Dyffryn Clwyd. The Normans sought to aid their consolidation in the south by founding new monasteries dependent on foreign houses, *e.g.*, Pembroke priory on Séez (afterwards St. Alban's), Brecon on Battle Abbey, Kidwelly on Sherborne,* but the monasteries that really revived

* The priory of Austin canons at Llanthony in the sleeve of Gwent was the only purely religious foundation at this time. But it was no less disliked and disturbed by the Welsh. It had a sad history. Craswall priory, under the Black Mountains, some six miles south-east of The Hay, was a cell of the Grandmontine reform. It was dissolved with the other alien priories in the fourteenth century and is one of the least known and most attractive monastic relics in Great Britain.

the old monastic life of Wales were those of the Cistercians.*

The first to be founded (after the Norman Tintern) was Whitland, which by 1165 had a Welsh abbot and was endowed by Rhys ap Gruffydd ("the Lord Rhys"). From there was established the most famous of them all, Strata Florida (Ystrad Fflur) in Cardiganshire, the "Westminster Abbey of Wales", the refuge and burial-place of her princes and poets. Six years later, in 1170, Owain Cyfeiliog founded Strata Marcella (Ystrad Marchell) near Welshpool, which was nearly wrecked at the start by the first abbot, who eloped with a nun (but repented and returned to his cloister); it survived and planted a daughter-house at Valle Crucis (Glyn y Groes), by Llangollen. Lantarnam, near Caerleon, and Aberconwy (where Llywelyn the Great died and was buried in 1240) were filiations of Strata Florida, and Cymer, near Dolgelley, of Cwm Hir in Radnor, whose origins are obscure. Other Cistercian houses were Basingwerk, Neath, and Margam, the first two of which originally belonged to the Benedictine congregation of Savigny. The priories of Augustinian canons at Beddgelert and of Premonstratensians at Tal y Llychau (Talley) in Carmarthenshire were also Welsh, and the Welsh monasteries became the centres of national life and culture, as contemporary bardic literature shows.

The friars, too, newly founded in the thirteenth century, were soon seen in Wales. Some thirteen years after Blessed Agnellus of Pisa landed in England, Llywelyn the Great built a house for Franciscans by

* The solitary life remained in honour. A famous hermit was Caradog Fynach, who lived near Haverfordwest and was buried in Saint David's Cathedral. Giraldus wanted Innocent III to canonize him.

his wife's tomb at Llanfaes in Anglesey, and the order was distinguished for its devotion to the Welsh cause. During the rising of Owain Glyndŵr (Glendower) Llanfaes itself was specially singled out to be ravaged by the English army.

Too much weight must not be given to Sir Owen Edwards's sentimental chapter on Bard and Friar in his *Wales*. "A close examination of the manuscripts of the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries reveals most of the bards as pious Catholics working in unison with, and receiving much of their inspiration from, the monks, who had generally espoused the Welsh national cause and suffered for it" (Phillips, *History of the Monastic Libraries of Wales*). The bards, like the troubadours, were prone to exaggerate, with the inevitable reaction among the severer men of religion, which produced a certain tension between priest and poet; there is still a reminiscence of it in Dr. Griffith Roberts's "Welsh Grammar" (1567). Some of the bards were themselves clergy, e.g., Llawdden, priest at Machynlleth, and Tudur Aled, a friar minor, while one of the greatest of them all, Dafydd ap Gwilym, was a cleric, if a rather irregular one.

The attempt made to establish the metropolitan status of Saint Davids naturally led to the increased popularity of the famous local saint, whose shrine became a great place of pilgrimage, but that Pope Callixtus II (d. 1124) granted an indulgence to the pilgrims, two visits to Saint Davids being equal to one to Rome, is doubtful. The great shrine in the north was St. Winefride's well at Holywell (see p. 44), the only place of pilgrimage in Great Britain whose Catholic history remains unbroken by the Reformation; other popular resorts were the shrine of St. Derfel

Gadarn* at Llanderfel in the Dee valley (he was reputed to have power to fetch the damned out of Hell !), of St. Melangell at Pennant in Montgomeryshire, and of our Lady of Penrhys in the Rhondda valley.†

It is not known when the Church in Wales gave up using the British rites of worship, but Anian (Einion) I, bishop of Bangor from 1267 to 1305, drew up service-books that came into use over most of the country (the "use of Bangor"). His *Pontificale* is still preserved at the cathedral in that town.

During the so-called Schism of the West, England sided with the "Urbanist" popes at Rome, and this introduced a further complication into Welsh ecclesiastical affairs—at the end of the fourteenth century there were three claimants to the see of Bangor. Owain Glyndŵr at the height of his power decided to submit himself to the "Clementine" pope at Avignon, Benedict XIII,‡ at the pressure of his French allies. The conditions of his recognition are interesting as showing what a religious Welshman and "a man of bravery and genius" (Henri Martin) thought was needful for his country at the beginning of the fifteenth century. Glyndŵr stipulated (*inter alia*) that Benedict should erect Saint Davids into a metropolitan see, with not only the three natural suffragans, but Bath, Exeter, Hereford, Lichfield, and Worcester as well

* The wooden image of St. Derfel Gadarn was used to burn Blessed John Forest at Smithfield in 1538, thus "fulfilling" the Welsh saying that Derfel the Mighty would set a forest on fire.

† Welsh pilgrims found their way abroad, too. A twelfth-century *codex* at Compostela says of visitors to the shrine of St. James, "Some sang to the accompaniment of the . . . lyre . . . others to the British and Welsh harp and *crwth*."

‡ It is practically certain that the Urbanist popes were the true ones; however, Clement VII and Benedict XIII are not referred to as antipopes, but as "called popes in their obedience".

(which certainly looks as if he were " putting it on " !) ; that only those speaking the language should be appointed to Welsh benefices ; that all impropriations of Welsh benefices by foreigners, whether individuals or corporations, should be annulled ; and that the country should be given two universities, one in the north, the other in the south. It is not to be doubted that had all, or even some, of these reforms been made, whether under a successful Glyndŵr or under the English kings, Wales would have been a Catholic country to-day. The abuse of spiritual powers and neglect of spiritual duties by the higher clergy, with the inevitable repercussions on the spiritual state of the parochial clergy and common people (who, moreover, generally lived in scattered communities and groups, difficult of access), was in very large measure due to the imposition on the Church in Wales of foreign dignitaries and the treating of her sees as mere pieces of preferment. Canterbury frequently did not scruple to use the spiritual penalties of excommunication and interdict as weapons in secular strife ; this was a common abuse of the times, and it inevitably led to contempt or craven fear of ecclesiastical authority.

Under Henry VIII Wales became definitely part of the realm of England, and the four dioceses of Wales part of an autonomous " Church of England " of which the King was " supreme head ". All the Welsh religious houses were suppressed with the lesser monasteries in 1536 ; in the same year the notorious William Barlow was appointed to be bishop of Saint Davids. This man, whose name figures so much in the controversy about " Anglican orders ", was an active tool of Thomas Cromwell and did himself and his family well at the expense of his see ; Sir Owen

Edwards, who had no bias against the Protestant Reformation, refers to his "unctuous hypocrisy". Meanwhile, the old tribal equality began to be modified and in place of the *boneddigion*, the leaders among equals, there appeared a class of professional lawyers and politicians and new landowners; for the first time there was a social and political division into two classes, the *gwyr mawr*, gentry, and the *gwerin*, common people.* With the coming of such men as Colonel John Jones, Maes y Garnedd, and Bussy Mansel at the second civil war in 1648 the authority of the old aristocracy definitely passed to the new adventurers and *bourgeoisie*, English or Welsh, so that when the time of crisis for the south came with the exploiting of the coalfields the people had lost their natural leaders and protectors.

At the religious "settlement" under Elizabeth all the bishops of England and Wales, with one exception, were deprived of their sees for refusing the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity of 1559. The exception was Anthony Kitchin of Llandaff (who, however, refused to consecrate Elizabeth's bishops). The other three were worthy of the best traditions of Christianity in Wales. Bangor was actually vacant, but William Glyn, a Welshman, had died only in the previous year. He had been a Catholic reformer of the type of More and Colet, a scholar and Hebraist. Fuller in his *Worthies* says of him, "None of the papists pressed their arguments with more strength and less passion. Though constant to his own he was not cruel to opposite judgements, as appeareth by there being no persecution

* It now became fashionable to speak English; Welsh was unrefined and ungentelemanly, and moreover, there was no money in it.

in his diocese.”* The last Catholic bishop of Saint Davids was also a Welshman, Henry Morgan, who succeeded Robert Ferrar who had suffered death for his Protestant principles under Queen Mary. Morgan was saved by timely death from being imprisoned with the other Catholic bishops. Thomas Goldwell, a Kentish man and a Theatine clerk regular, had been appointed to Saint Asaph under Mary in 1555 and after refusing the oath of supremacy under Elizabeth he managed to escape abroad. He was the only English bishop at the Council of Trent, and among other offices held those of vicar general to St. Charles Borromeo at Milan and vice-Gerent of Rome for the cardinal vicar Savelli under Gregory XIII. He died in 1585, the last survivor of the old hierarchy of England and Wales. There was not again a Catholic bishop of a Welsh or English diocese until 1850.

* Even before the Protestants' zeal for clerical marriage there were still married priests in parts of Wales. Glyn was the son of the rector of Heneglwys in Anglesey.

CHAPTER II

THE CHURCH AFTER THE REFORMATION

IT is now common knowledge, admitted by all of whatsoever predisposition, that the Reformation was not merely not welcomed but was definitely disliked in Wales, and that up till the Civil War no other part of Great Britain, not even Lancashire, was more openly Catholic: "The Welsh counties tell [the Earl of] Pembroke", wrote the Duke of Feria to King Philip of Spain, "to send no preachers across the border or they will not get back alive." It is often difficult to tell what was the general attitude of the common people to some great change or movement in times past, but for Wales at this era we have the evidence of the bards, who were the spokesmen of all and sundry. Sixteenth-century poets such as Sion Brwynog of Anglesey in his *Cywydd y Ddwy Ffydd* (*Cywydd to the Two Faiths*) and Thomas ab Ifan ap Rhys in *Creawdwr Nef arno y crier* denounce the new-fangled religion and the ways of its exponents with anger and scorn, and for a hundred years there was a ceaseless circulation of manuscript books of Welsh prose and verse wherein the Mass, our Lady, the Welsh saints, rosaries and roods, monasteries and shrines, were praised and lamented over. Famous among these were the poems (not "carols", as they are generally called) which the protomartyr of Wales, the schoolmaster

Blessed Richard Gwyn (h.d.q. 1584), wrote in jail at Ruthin and elsewhere. He appeals to the people to stick to the old Church, which is "beyond all price, shining clear as the sun through the smoke that rises from Satan's pit between the blind man and the sky"; with justified bitterness he describes the new illiterate clergy—laymen, grooms, labourers, cobblers, paid a wretched pittance while the tithes and stipends went into the pockets of others;* he sets out the reasons why the heretical worship should be avoided; and he keeps his faith in Wales and her children (there was a strong racial element in the Catholic opposition).† We owe the preservation of these poems to Dom William Charles Pugh, o.s.b., Penrhyn, doctor, soldier, monk, and himself a poet of the times (d. c. 1680) "who left behind him a large collection of writings in verse and in prose, which are of great literary merit. He bore a large share in the Catholic movement of the seventeenth century which saved Monmouth to the Church for 150 years longer. His poems were copied and learned by all classes of the population. Besides his Welsh poems, Father Pugh compiled a catechism in Latin which remains in manuscript at Llanofor".

Nor was the opposition confined to the common people; recusant rolls and other documents show that Buckleys of Beaumaris, Lloyds of Iâl, Trefors of Tre-

* A Protestant writer, Henry Richards, says, "It is scarcely possible to exaggerate the utter, one might almost say the contemptuous, neglect with which Wales was treated during the early years of the Reformation." If Feria's report was true, this is not altogether surprising.

† When he was in the stocks at Wrexham, Gwyn made a nice retort to a minister who pestered him. The man was afflicted with a very red nose, and when he claimed to have received the keys as much as St. Peter, Gwyn replied, "With this difference: that whereas St. Peter was given the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, you obviously had those of the beer-cellar."

felyn, Prices of Llanfyllin, Griffiths of Penrhyn, Salisburys of Llewenni, Hammers of Flint, Owens of Llwyn and Hengwrt, Herberts of Lymore, Lloyds of Rhiwaelog, Carnes of Ewenny, Stradlings of Glamorgan, Joneses of Abermarlais, Madryns of Madryn, Lewises of Fan, Wynns of Bodfel and Melai and Gwydir, and many other well-known families in the latter part of the sixteenth century were faithful to what is still often called *yr hen grefydd* ; the old religion.

Between 1539 and 1680 there were over fifty Welshmen, clergy and lay, whose names are known who were executed or died in prison for the Faith, beginning with the Venerable John Griffith, formerly rector of Towyn, who was hanged at Camberwell, and ending with a missionary priest named Robert Pugh who died in Newgate. Fifteen of them have been beatified among the English martyrs,* and the causes of nine others are in progress. Outstanding among them, besides Gwyn, were Blessed John Roberts, Philip Powel, Philip Evans, John Kemble (Welsh on his mother's side) and David Lewis, all mentioned elsewhere in this book. The feast of Blessed Edward Powel and Richard Fetherston (Smithfield, 1540) has been observed in Wales on July 30th since their beatification was declared by Pope Leo XIII in 1886.

The transition from the old religion to the new was made without any general commotion and over a considerable period of time ; it gradually came about that " Welshmen were content to fall in with the humour of the government of the day and to take their religion from the superior powers ". Seeing that the majority of them were so passionately attached to the things that they knew and opposed both to Protes-

* Which is therefore a misleading term.

tantism and its English sponsors,* it may seem curious that Wales did not become religiously another Ireland. In all probability she would have done but for one thing—the failure of the supply of Welsh-speaking clergy.

In 1568 Dr. (afterwards Cardinal) Allen founded the English College at Douay with the pecuniary help of Dr. Morgan Phillips, formerly precentor of Saint Davids, and the administrative help of Dr. Owen Lewis, canon of Cambrai and Archdeacon of Hainault. Nevertheless, apparently nothing could be done specifically for Wales at Douay. Ten years later, on the advice of Allen and Lewis, Pope Gregory XIII established the English College at Rome, in connection with the ancient English Hospice. The instruction of the students was entrusted to the Society of Jesus, but the warden of the Hospice, Dr. Morris Clynog† (*i.e.*, of Clynnog Fawr in Caernarfon), was made rector of the College. There were thirty-three English students and about seven Welsh, and the rector, an amiable incompetent man, unduly favoured his fellow-countrymen and mismanaged the place generally. This led to trouble and on Ash Wednesday 1579 the English students walked out in a body; Dr. Lewis, who seems from the first to have had both anti-Jesuit and anti-English bias (for all his close friendship with Allen), had been on the spot all the time and he was of the opinion that the three Jesuit professors had fomented the strife.‡ When the matter was reported to the

* Only three Protestants suffered in Wales under Queen Mary; of whom only one was of Welsh blood.

† He was bishop-elect of Bangor at the death of Queen Mary.

‡ On the other hand, Lewis is reported to have said to a Scots bishop, John Leslie of Ross, "Let us stick together, for we are the old and true inhabitants and owners of the isle of Britain. These others be but usurpers and mere possessors". (Knox, *Records of English Catholics*, ii, p. 82.)

Pope, he removed Dr. Clynog from the rectorship and directed the students to nominate a successor. The choice of the English majority was Father Aggazzari, senior of the Jesuit professors, and in spite of the Welsh opposition he was appointed. Dr. Lewis retired for some years to Milan, where Dr. Griffith Roberts* was confessor and chaplain to St. Charles Borromeo (who died in Lewis's arms), but he had no longer an influential part in Welsh affairs. He was made bishop of Cassano in Calabria in 1588 and died in 1595, just as he was to be created cardinal.

These squabbles at the English College were more than surface differences and had far-reaching effects. Henceforward, in spite of the fact that very many individual Welshmen became Jesuits and distinguished themselves as missionaries and martyrs, there was for long strife between the continental Welsh Catholics in general and the Society, and in such discussions as the "Wisbech stirs" and the "Archpriest controversy" the Welsh concerned took sides against them.† The late W. Llewelyn Williams in his book on the *Making of Modern Wales*, shows that, even apart from the fact that the English sovereign Elizabeth was a Tudor, the Welsh were opposed to making use of Philip of Spain or any other sort of political activity for the reconversion of England and Wales; "they wanted [the country] to be 'secretly persuaded' by priests, not

* He wrote a manual of Welsh Grammar (Milan, 1567: incomplete reprint begun at Carmarthen in 1857 and finished in 1917!; complete reprint by *Revue Celtique*, Paris, 1870-83) and an appeal to Wales to keep the faith, *Y Drych Cristionogawl* (Rouen, 1585). He also edited a catechism by Dr. Clynog (Milan, 1568), which was the first original prose work printed in Welsh.

† The writer named in the next sentence observes with fairness that "at first, no doubt, the hostility of the Welsh to the Society of Jesus was based for the most part on personal considerations."

subdued by soldiers", as the French and Scottish factions were prepared to do : and this went far deeper than a mere difference of policy. With this may be compared Dr. David Mathew's view, expressed in *The Celtic Peoples and Renaissance Europe*, that " Dr. Lewis had the fundamental simplicity of the Cymric middle ages, and in his failing efforts for his country he went down before the complex modern world . . . he faltered, a mediæval survival, beside the strength and the pressure of the great Tridentine machine." Those are very just observations, and Owen Lewis may be taken as a representative Welsh figure, not only then but in a measure now : the Welsh are in some ways still a " mediæval " people—and the Catholic Church of the twentieth century is not mediæval.

The tradition of Dr. Lewis was carried on by other distinguished Welshmen, particularly in the matter of the revival of the English Benedictines. It was the legally trained mind of David Augustine Baker, of Abergavenny, that saw the canonical importance of the aged Dom Sigebert Buckley, the sole surviving member of the English Congregation O.S.B., and perhaps himself a Welshman, and it was Blessed John Roberts, Trawsfynydd (martyred in 1610), who with the support of Dom Leander Jones, Llanfrynach, founded in 1605 the monastery of St. Gregory at Douay (now Downside Abbey). " The securing of the foundation of the monastery ", wrote the late Edmund Bishop in the *Downside Review*, xvi, p. 34, " was the breaking, the breaking beyond hope of repair, of the net that with steady, long-skilled, and inexorable hand, was being drawn round the clergy to render them helpless captives " ; it made impossible what so many Welsh and others claimed that some of the Jesuits aimed at, a

monopoly in England and Wales. There were Gwyns, Gwilyms, Davieses, Crowthers, Powels, Owens, Prichards, Pughs, Phillipses, Williamses, among the Benedictines on the continent, and his fellow-countrymen were so numerous at Douay while he was prior there that Father Leander could write of his community to Abbot Caverel as "*Ego et Walli mei*"—"I and my Welshmen". The last survivor of old St. Gregory's was a Lorymer of Perthâr (d. 1832).

Thus the exiled Welsh Catholics, who had gained so sorry a name for themselves in Rome, played a part as Benedictines at Douay that had a permanent effect on the Church in England; but only once more was a Welshman to come to the fore in English Catholic affairs before the days of Cardinal Vaughan, and that was when Dom Leander Jones came to London in 1635 to meet Laud in order to try and find a basis for reunion with the Anglican Church. He died while the negotiations were in progress.

Meanwhile, the state of Welsh candidates for the priesthood was getting worse and worse. Students from Wales were objects of suspicion, men who would breed dissension*; and the same standard of general education was required for their admittance to seminaries as from the English, who had better opportunities for schooling. So the number of Welsh students became less and less, no separate seminary was provided for them, and the supply of Welsh-speaking priests gradually gave out: with it went the last hope of saving the Welsh for Catholicism. Jesuits and Franciscans, with a few Benedictines and secular priests, worked nobly to conserve what was left. "The racial

* Father Parsons, S.J., said he would never allow two Welshmen to stop together in the English College at Rome all the time he was rector, "for if there were three they would set the house on fire".

animosity and the sectarian prejudices, so lightly aroused in Rome in 1579, . . . led, in the long result, to Wales being left derelict, until the Puritans came and held before Welshmen a new religious ideal which, whatever be its defects, had the merit of meeting the spiritual needs and conforming to the distinctive genius of the people of Wales" (W. Llewelyn Williams).

In the strife between Charles I and the Parliamentarians Wales was almost solid for the King*; after his defeat the country came directly under English rule and there was no longer any prospect of a Catholic revival. In 1650 the Long Parliament passed an act "for the better propagation and preaching of the Gospel in Wales", and Puritan ministers sowed the seed of that Nonconformity that was to come to fruition during the next century. The final blow was the persecution arising from the Titus Oates "plot", when nearly all remaining Welsh-speaking priests were put to death or driven into exile. There still remained, of course, individual Catholics and as it were "pockets" of the faithful here and there. At Llanfair Cilgoed in the parish of Llantilio Crossenny there was scarcely a Protestant; the priest received the tithes of the pre-Reformation chapel which was in use by Catholics up till 1689. In 1673, of the 13,311 people in the county of Brecknock 156 were Papists (682 other dissenters); in 1767 this number had fallen to 60, all Welsh. Cwm-yoy, a tiny and very remote village in the Ewyas valley, shut in on three sides by the Monmouthshire Black Mountains and on the fourth by low marshy

* The local record of a visit of Oliver ap Robert ap Harry ap Richard ap Morgan ap William Williams, *i.e.*, Oliver Cromwell, to Carmarthen is significant: "1649. This year, in July, that bloody O. Cromwell was at Carmarthen, vpon his way to Ireland, where he committed many bloody Massacres in Tredagh and Wexford, &c."

ground, had 17 Catholic recusants to be proceeded against in 1719, and there were still 15 in 1767, 3 men and 12 women, aged from 30 to 80 years, and all peasants.* Mgr. Walmesley, o.s.b.† vicar apostolic for the Western district, reported to Rome in 1773 that there were 750 Catholics and 9 missionaries in the whole of Wales. These people were predominantly Welsh but very few Catholic publications in their language are recorded during the eighteenth century: among them a short catechism (*Catechism Byrr* . . .) and an exposition of the Creed of Pope Pius IV (*Sail yr Athrawiaeth Gatholig* . . .), both by "Dewi Nantbrân" (Father David Gregory Powell, o.s.f., of Abergavenny) and printed in London in 1764. The second book was republished at Llanrwst in Denbighshire in 1839. J. P. Coghlan also printed (London, 1776) *Allwydd y Nêf . . . o glasgliad D. P. Off* [eiriad]: "Key of Heaven . . . from the collection of D. P. Priest"—presumably the work of David Powell. A translation of the "Imitation" (*Patrum y Gwir Gristion* . . .) by "H. O. Gwenynog o Fôn", formerly attributed to the eighteenth century, is now known to have been the work of Father Hugh Owen, s.j., at the end of the seventeenth.

* In the same neighbourhood there were 3 at Clodock, 3 at Oldcastle, 3 at Llanigon, and 2 at Hay (1767). The situation of Cwmyoy in those days can be gauged by Coxe's account in his *Tour* (1801) of an expedition by chaise to Llanthony Priory, a bit further on.

† Dom Charles Walmesley (1722-97) was a distinguished mathematician and scientist as well as a doctor of divinity of the Sorbonne. He was elected a fellow of the Royal Society of London and of similar societies at Paris, Berlin, and Bologna, and was a consultant of the British government on the reform of the calendar and adoption of the "new style". During the Gordon riots in 1780 the mob burned his chapel and house at Bath, and all the archives of the Western district were destroyed together with his own books and manuscripts. As consecrator of Mgr. John Carroll, first bishop of Baltimore, he was the "father" of the whole hierarchy of the United States.

CHAPTER III

THE OLD CENTRES

APART from the seats of the Catholic gentry at Talacre, Llanarth, and Courtfield, the chief known places where the Faith has never died out and where the congregations today contain, or till lately contained, some proportion of indigenous hereditary Catholics are four, Monmouth, Abergavenny, Brecon, and Holywell.

“The land between the Severn and Usk, with its reminiscences of the loose jurisdiction of the Lords Marchers, and of the comparative freedom that resulted from the conflicting authority that obtains in all border-lands, was of old the delectable mountains of religious exile and spiritual independence” (Thomas Richards, *The Puritan Movement in Wales* 1639-53). It is an interesting amplification of this spiritual independence that while early Protestant nonconformity was rife on the one hand, Catholic nonconformity on the other was equally or more in evidence in this district.* In part this was due to the presence of such influential families as the Vaughans, Herberts, and Morgans, but the spiritual fountain-head of Catholicism around Monmouth during the seventeenth century was in the parish of Welsh Newton, four miles north of the town, where the Jesuits had a college at the Cwm (see p. 170). A list of Catholic recusants,

* William Wroth, Llanfaches, the father of Welsh Nonconformity, was the son of a Catholic recusant of Abergavenny (1595).

covering only half Monmouthshire, against whom proceedings were to be taken, gives 360 names in 1719, nearly all of them Welsh.*

After the Cwm had been broken up and the fathers dispersed at the end of 1678 the centre shifted to Perthîr, a little to the south in the parish of Rockfield, an estate held first by Powels and then by Lorymers. The Franciscan Recollects† came here during Mgr. Prichard's residence, and they had their novitiate here from 1815 till 1818, when they moved to Aston. Mgr. Matthew Prichard, o.s.f., the last Welsh bishop in Wales till 1895,‡ made his headquarters at Perthîr from his appointment as vicar apostolic of the Western district in 1715 till his death in 1750, and so did Mgr. Sharrock for a time when he was coadjutor to Mgr. Walmesley between 1780 and 1797. There were 70 Catholics at Perthîr in 1813, but on the departure of the Franciscans five years later the mission was merged in that of Monmouth. The Perthîr baptismal registers from 1758 to 1818 are full of Welsh names, many of them current in the neighbourhood today. They have been published by the Catholic Record Society (vol. I).

Other places where Mass was celebrated in this district are Hilston (owned by the Needhams of Skenfrith till 1803), the Grove (now called New House farm),

* Doubtless there were others, who at the moment were not to be proceeded against. Diocesan lists of Papists may reasonably be supposed generally to understate numbers, for obvious reasons.

† A family of strictly observant Franciscans started in France at the end of the sixteenth century. Since 1897 they are merged in the branch of their order called simply Friars Minor.

‡ There does not seem to have been anything Welsh about Mgr. Thomas Griffiths, vicar apostolic of the London district (d. 1847), except his name. Mgr. F. G. Mostyn (d. 1847) was vicar apostolic of the second Northern district. The first bishop of Maitland in Australia, Dom Henry Charles Davis, o.s.b. (d. 1854), was a native of Usk, and Herbert Vaughan became bishop of Salford in 1872.

and the Graig, Mgr. Prichard's home. But Catholic families died out or moved away to be swallowed up in industrial Glamorgan, and so in 1846 the remnants of these missions were gathered up into one at Coed Anghred, a name of ill omen, for it seems to mean the Wood of Unbelief. Here in a lonely little wood on a hill above Skenfrith a small church was built at the cost of Mr. William Middleton with a presbytery, school, and cemetery attached, but the mission did not survive many years. It was closed in 1911, the church pulled down, and the property sold. It was a condition of sale that the cemetery should be reserved for the use of the Catholics of Monmouth and district. When I visited it about ten years ago it was in a deplorable state of neglect. Nor was it encouraging to be told with open satisfaction by an old woman in Skenfrith that she "remembered the Papists going away". But the families of Watkins, Llangarron, and Rosser, Skenfrith, have kept the Faith till this day; James Rosser, born at the New Inn in 1812 and died there in 1899, was a great controversialist and known locally as "the pope".

MONMOUTH

In Monmouth town (Welsh *Trefynewydd*) itself the buildings of the former Benedictine priory came into the hands of the Catholic family of Williams and Mass was said there in the old chapel of St. Cadog in the time of James II.* Afterwards the faithful met in various places, including the Robin Hood inn in Monnow Street. Fifty local Catholics took advantage of the Catholic Relief Act of 1778 and swore allegiance

* John Salisbury, priest, of Monmouth, died in jail in London in 1679, after having been sentenced to death.

to George III ; of these, thirty or so bore Welsh names. Among the members of the congregation at this time were the Misses Evans, Frances, Mary, and Elizabeth, who gave to the mission their estate of the Grange in the parish of St. Maughan (Llanfochnan) ; it was sold to Lord Llangattock at the end of the nineteenth century. In 1792 a committee was formed for the building of a chapel, and of its members ten apparently were Welsh, four English, and two Irish, the last being members of the Kane family, which was prominent in local Catholic affairs from before the middle of the eighteenth century till early in the nineteenth. The chapel was built by Watkins, landlord of the Robin Hood, and opened in 1793 ; it was allowed by the magistrates on condition that it did not look like a church, was screened from the public eye, and should not be entered by worshippers more than one at a time ! The present church of St. Mary is on the same site in St. Mary's Street, and on the floor is marked the limits of the original building and its subsequent enlargements.

Mgr. W. G. Sharrock, o.s.b., coadjutor of the Western district, resided at and served Monmouth from 1791 to 1797, taking the place of the Rev. John Williams, who died at the age of eighty. Then in 1802 the Rev. George Gildart arrived, bringing with him the endowments of the secular mission at Holywell ; he enlarged the chapel and served the mission faithfully for twenty years, during all of which time the resources of Holywell and Monmouth were united. When Gildart came Catholics in the town were said to number 120, but Mgr. Collingridge, o.s.f., made a return of only 40 to the Propaganda Congregation eleven years later : perhaps the first figure included the outlying districts. The baptismal registers of Monmouth from 1791 to

1830 have been printed by the Catholic Record Society (vol. IX);* the names are mostly the Welsh ones familiar in the district.

The Franciscan Recollects established a residence at Monmouth in 1687, at the same time as Abergavenny. They bought the priory from the Williamses, but sold it again in 1734 when the residence was closed as such and henceforward only one or two missionaries were maintained there. From their establishment until their final departure in 1812 there were about thirty Franciscan *praeses* and missioners at Monmouth, beginning with Father Pacificus Williams and ending with Father Constant Henrion, a Frenchman; none of them were Welsh after 1732.

Edward Metcalfe (see p. 73) was priest at Monmouth for a short time in 1835, and was followed by Thomas Burgess, who after he left Prior Park had been sent to Cannington. He opened a school for small boys, and stayed at Monmouth till he was made second bishop of Clifton in 1851. At the beginning of his incumbency Catholics numbered 160. He was succeeded by his nephew, Thomas Burgess Abbot, who had been the first student at Prior Park and was to be the first missionary rector of Monmouth. After his ordination he was priest at Coed Anghred until his uncle's promotion, and he was in charge at Monmouth for forty-three years. Father Abbot was a most zealous and devoted priest, full of enthusiasm for a sacred past of which he felt himself to be the personal custodian; he was indeed a living link between the pre-Emancipation times when Catholicism in Monmouth was still Welsh

* Edited by the late John Hobson Matthews, who did invaluable work for the history of penal-times Catholics in Monmouthshire; it was recognized by his election to the *gorsedd* of the bards of Wales, with the title *Mab Cernwy*, "Son of Cornwall". He died in 1914.

and the later era. It was Father Abbot who gave his earliest lessons in Latin to young Herbert Vaughan, later to be archbishop and cardinal. He resigned his cure in 1894 and retired to his native Lancashire where he died at the age of eighty-four in 1904. It was during his incumbency that a community of French Sisters of our Lady of Charity and the Refuge opened a convent at Troy (*i.e.*, Trothy) House, a seventeenth-century mansion with much earlier back-premises. Here they conduct a "refuge" for young women.

The church at Monmouth possesses some very fine relics of the past. A set of sixteenth-century vestments (not uniform in pattern) was brought from Holywell by a priest about 1720, together with an old processional cross and a crucifix. The chasuble he cut into small pieces for fear of discovering his priesthood, and when it was put together again for Father Abbot it was necessary to alter its shape. On the south side of the nave is an altar used by Blessed John Kemble for fifty years. It is made of two small but heavy "tables" of carved oak, which when separated are not recognizable as being part of an altar but look like two benches; the reredos was made from the bedstead in which Mgr. Prichard died at Perthîr in 1750. The missal-stand was made by Kemble himself while in jail at Hereford, and in the kalendar of the missal (dated 1623, two years before his ordination) is the memorandum of a friend's death in his own handwriting. The church also has a chalice called Father Kemble's, said to have been recovered from a farm where it had been used at harvest-homes. All these things were brought from Pembridge by Father Abbot when Mr. Townley sold the castle into Protestant hands.

The venerable and touching figure of John Kemble

has never ceased to brood over the Monmouth neighbourhood. His father was a Kemble of the Kembles of Wiltshire, Urchingfield, and Llangarron, his mother a Morgan of the Waen and Blackbrooke, and so far as is known the whole of his long life was spent ministering to the Catholics around his uncle's seat at Pembridge. When he was eighty the Oates terror broke out; he was dragged off to prison and after much ill-treatment was hung, for being a seminary priest, on Widemarsh Common at Hereford on August 22, 1697.* His body lies in Welsh Newton churchyard, and that grave is the centre of a veritable holy-land. A mile south-east is the Cwm, where Kemble's friend Blessed David Lewis lived; a mile and a half to the north is the martyr's home, Pembridge Castle, where Mass was celebrated in his roof-chapel till the Townleys sold the place in 1839; further north still, just off the Hereford road, is his reputed birthplace, Rhydycar, and close by it Treago Castle, a tiny fortress that has been inhabited by the Mynors and their kinsmen ever since it was built eight hundred years ago. Unhappily they held the Faith with less tenacity, but in Kemble's day it was the refuge of Blessed William Harcourt† and other hunted priests.

* On the day of execution, when the under-sheriff, one Digges, arrived at the jail, Kemble asked for time first to finish his prayers and then to smoke a pipe of tobacco and have a drink. The governor and under-sheriff joined him, Digges in his turn delaying in order to finish *his* pipe. This curious and cheering incident originated the local custom of calling the last pipe of a sitting "the Kemble pipe", a custom only lately fallen into disuse. Cf., the footnote on p. 394 of Sir John Hawkins's edition of Walton's *Compleat Angler* (London, 1808), where Blessed John is made a Protestant martyr under Queen Mary! He was beatified in 1929. His left hand is preserved in St. Francis Xavier's church at Hereford.

† A Jesuit from Lancashire, *alias* Waring, *vere* Barrow. There is a picture of him after execution and his hiding-place, called "the pope's hole", at Treago.

The dying-out of gentle families or their reduction by fines and confiscation for recusancy to the status of yeomen, the submersion in their turn of the yeomanry, and the ceaseless drain to the new centres of factory development brought about the shocking reduction of indigenous Catholics in northern Monmouthshire at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century ; but it must be admitted that, in the words of the late J. H. Matthews, "Apathy and failure of the missionary spirit have largely contributed to the decay" (C. R. S., vol. I, p. 271). Decay of religion goes hand in hand with decay of civilization and culture, and the old rural order decayed before the whirlwind of industrial money-making. The explanation of the desolation of Coed Anghred to which I have referred can be to a considerable extent found at Rhydycar, where it is alleged that Blessed John Kemble was born.

Both the surroundings and the building are altered since he knew them : the woods are much less, the hedges much more, cultivation notably decreased, no common fields left ; the apparently sixteenth-century walls of the house are now adorned with "gothic" window-frames of wood, beast-house and tollet and barn have shed some of their weathered stone shingles and are roofed in part with corrugated iron, the fold contains certain strange engines of which he would be puzzled to know the use. Still, I think he would know his earthly home at the first glance ; its main features are unchanged and its peace and solitude remain ; he would recognize, too, a certain amount of good farming—but he would fail to find that ordered life with which he was familiar. The farmer of Rhydycar and his neighbours are fighting a losing battle with

forces they do not understand ; like Dr. Owen Lewis at Rome, they are going down before the complex modern world, and their own proper world is long in bits. No bread is baked or beer brewed at Rhydyar ; they play instruments of music no more than they go to Mass ; and no one any longer knows *Suo Gan* or *Cwydd y Gof* or *Y Gwew Fach*.

Nevertheless, the present tenants are stout border folk, who, if they do not mourn a way of life they've never known, have yet inherited some of the virtue of their predecessors, and when I visited there on an Easter Sunday some years back I was received with kindness and hospitality. They knew nought of John Kemble, except vaguely from a former enquirer (evidently a priest), but I was shown the house with its comic assortment of wall-papers and bare joists, open fire-places and iron range, good bits of old furniture, gimcracks of to-day, and misplaced ingenuities of yesterday. In a large room, stone flagged and obviously the living-room of Kemble's time, I sat in the chimney-corner and drank hard cider (last vestige almost of the former decent domestic economy), and the latest baby was plumped on to my lap while his handsome dark mother cut cake and other children peeped round doors at or even ventured remarks to the stranger. Afterwards I was shown the vaulted cellar far older than the house, and with a couple of hogsheads of cider, a few potatoes, and much rubbish to represent the plenty of ale and stores that an aged man could remember there in his youth.

This is the birthplace of the martyr today : one of many relics of a religious way of life which is past, nor has the " second spring " yet given indications of that summer wherein we might look for its return in some

new form. Like so much of the beauty of this country—cathedrals, village churches, mansions—Rhydycar farm is a moribund thing, beautiful in death. The religion has gone, life is slipping away: their places are or will be taken by mere existence or complete dissolution. Every year on the anniversary of the martyrdom a pilgrimage is made to the grave at Welsh Newton, and it is said that it has never been omitted in 255 years.* It may well be so, seeing how the labours of Father Kemble and his companions bore fruit in the neighbourhood for many generations; now, however, the pilgrims are mostly townspeople, many from further afield. God forbid that I should say that John Kemble's blood is no longer the seed of Catholics—but certainly it bears fruit elsewhere than where he laboured.

ABERGAVENNY

Even had the Faith not survived there Abergavenny would still be held in honour among Catholics, for it was the birthplace in 1575 of the venerable Father Augustine Baker, o.s.b.,† and in 1616 of Blessed David Lewis, s.j. (*alias* Charles Baker), who were educated at the local grammar-school, as was Blessed Philip

* There is no reason to suppose that the body has ever been disturbed. Three long lives take us back to John Kemble: Father Abbot knew a woman at Llangrove Common who was born in 1752, Catherine Watkins, who used to visit the grave on her way to Mass at Pembridge. Another old Catholic, called Hull, used to look after the grave and repaired it with an iron clamp when the stone cracked. The original inscription runs: I K / Dyed the 22 / August / Anno Do: / 1679. "*Dyed!*" There is a more recent inscription, very badly cut, at the foot of the stone.

† The Bakers, like the Cecils, were descended from the Seisyllts of Allt yr Ynys. Father Augustine was eighth in descent from Owain Glyndŵr.

Powel, o.s.b., and both Lewis and Blessed Philip Evans, s.j., said Mass and ministered to the Catholic people of the town. But over and above these things there is an almost unbroken record and a series of relics of Catholicism in Abergavenny down to our time from at least 1674.

About that time, or perhaps from 1640, Mass was celebrated for a number of years at the house of Thomas Gunter, attorney, in Cross Street ; later it became the Parrot inn and then the Cardiff Arms. In 1907, two hundred and thirty years after the martyrs Lewis and Evans had ceased to frequent it, the chapel was found intact in the attic, with frescoes of the adoration of the Magi, *etc.*, and many contemporary legal documents. When James II came to the throne the Franciscan Recollects determined to establish nine new residences in Great Britain, one of which was to be at Abergavenny, and Peter Morgan gave them a house in Frogmore Street for the purpose in 1687. It is probable that Mass was said in this house (where Messrs. Olivers' boot-shop now stands). Early in the eighteenth century the building at the back was put up as a chapel, but was soon superseded by a larger chapel in the same street, which, after being enlarged in 1830 in consequence of the Irish influx, served the Catholics of the town till 1860 ; it is now a printing-house.

At the French Revolution refugee Recollect novices were sheltered for a time at Abergavenny, but the English province was dwindling ; in 1809 Abergavenny ceased to be an official " residence " for the friars and forty-eight years later the mission was handed over to the Benedictines. From 1687 till 1857 there was a series of twenty-four Franciscans in charge, of whom

nine bore Welsh names. Among them were Father Matthew Prichard, who went to Perthôr on being made vicar apostolic in 1715, Father Gregory Powell (" Dewi Nantbrân ", mentioned above) from Breconshire, and Father Edward Ignatius Richards, a descendant of distinguished families in Glamorgan ; he was succeeded from 1827 to 1839 by Father Joseph William Francis Hendren, who later became first bishop of Clifton and then of Nottingham. The Abergavenny registers from 1740 till the end of the Franciscan period have been printed by the Catholic Record Society (volume XXVII), edited by J. H. Canning, k.c.s.g., with an historical introduction by Dom Hilary Willson. Some of the entries are from out-lying places, in Herefordshire, Breconshire, Glamorgan, and even Carmarthen-shire. Up till 1820 the names are mostly of Welsh folk, but during the next twenty years they are already outnumbered by Irish ; it was reported in 1797 that " the Welsh language is indispensably necessary to the missionary in Abergavenny ".

It was fitting that Benedictines should take over Abergavenny, for there was a big priory there before the dissolution (its minster is now the parish-church). The first priest in charge was Dom Wilfrid Price, and during his incumbency the foundation-stone was laid of a new church, in Penypound. It was finished in 1860 and consecrated to God in honour of our Lady and St. Michael by Mgr. Brown of Newport and Menevia. The church, of considerable size, was designed by a pupil of the elder Pugin and is the best specimen of " gothic revival " in South Wales. Its most notable benefactor was John Baker Gabb, k.s.g., of Llwyn Du. A convent of the White Sisters was founded by the Hon. Mrs. Herbert of Llanofor in 1906, during the

incumbency of Dom Austin Wray. This priest was in charge from 1894 till 1919, and by his personality and activity in public affairs definitely brought the local Catholics "out of the catacombs". He was followed by a no less energetic and loved pastor, Dom Hilary Willson, titular cathedral prior of Rochester; it was due to the enterprise and hard work of him and of Mr. Canning, of Newport, that the parish registers were transcribed and published.* The parish was assigned to the monks of Ampleforth in 1891.

The Abergavenny church possesses some extremely lovely pre-reformation vestments; their origins are not known, but they were handed over by the Franciscans to the Benedictines as belonging to the mission. There are five chasubles, two dalmatics, a cope, a stole, maniple, and burse, an altar cloth, several veils, and a number of scraps. Unfortunately, except for two chasubles (both cut down to the so-called Roman shape) all the main parts had to be renewed on account of wear some eighty years ago, so that only the orphries remain. They appear all to be of the sixteenth century, and are embroidered with figures of saints, *etc.* Two of the orphries bear some interesting heraldry, and may have belonged to Robert Wharton or Perfeŷ (Purefoy), last Catholic bishop of Hereford. The church has also a pre-reformation chalice and a brief of Pope Clement X, dated July 20, 1676, granting for the space of seven years a plenary indulgence to all who should visit the "church or chapel of St. Michael on the Hill" during the feast of the Dedication of St. Michael (September 29). The conditions are the usual

* When the present writer was living near Abergavenny he was told of this monk that, "If you want the Roman Catholic priest you will always find him among the poor people's houses in Tudor Street."

confession, communion, and prayer for the Pope's intentions, namely, peace, overcoming of heresies, and the good estate of the Church. The chapel referred to stood on the Skirrid Fawr, a large hill above Llanfihangel Crucorney, three miles from Abergavenny, and its foundations are still visible. Archdeacon Coxe in his *Historical Tour through Monmouthshire* (1801) says: "To this place many Roman Catholics in the vicinity are said to repair annually on Michaelmas eve, and perform their devotions. The earth of this spot is likewise considered as sacred, and was formerly carried away to cure diseases, and to sprinkle the coffins of those who were interred; but whether this superstitious practice still continues I was not able to ascertain."

BRECON

Brecon (in Welsh *Aberhonddu*) has had a continuous succession of Catholics from before the Reformation but not an unbroken line of resident priests. From 1642 till the Oates "plot" it was served by William Lloyd, brother to Blessed John Lloyd, who was himself condemned for his priesthood in 1679; the tradition of his death in Brecon jail a week before the date fixed for his execution—how his cell was found full of light and he kneeling dead in the midst—has been handed down to our day through an old Catholic, John Williams, who died in Brecon workhouse in 1898. While he was in prison Mr. Lloyd made a will, which was the basis of what was known as the Triple Trust or Lloyd Trust of the Secular Clergy in Wales. There is a copy of it, made either by Fr. Williams or by Lewis Havard, senior, in the Cardiff diocesan archives. For over a hundred years after Lloyd's death there was no

resident priest except temporarily (*e.g.*, James Pritchard in 1707).

Outstanding people in the Brecon district were the Havards, a Norman family that became completely assimilated to their Welsh neighbours;* one branch remained Catholic (a Rhys Havard was noted as a recusant in 1680) and was settled at Senni, in the parish of Defynock, in a place not long ago still distinguished as "Roman dingle", and there were Catholic Havards also at Battle. This family has many descendants among the yeomen and peasants of western and southern Breconshire, but those of the Catholic line have now gone away, lapsed, or died out, with one exception: there is in the present Brecon parish a Powell, whose grandmother was a Catholic Havard and married a (possibly Catholic) Powell; their son was a Catholic but married a Protestant Morgan and the present Powell was not brought up a Catholic, but has since been received into the Church. There are, however, Catholic Havards at Ystradgynlais in the south-western corner of the county (present parish of Ammanford), descendants of the last Senni Havard, who left there in 1865. The last Havards mentioned in the Brecon registers are three children of David and Jane baptized between 1901 and 1904. The chief burial places of the Havards are Defynock, Brecon priory church, Aberyscir, near Brecon, and Cefn Coed Cymmer, near Merthyr.

Brecon was a peculiarly Welsh-speaking mission, and it is a matter for great regret that there are no parish records of before 1799, or rather 1804, for the entries in the register before that are only a note of the

* There is a Havard chapel in Brecon priory church, now the Anglican cathedral.

birthdays of the children of Howell and Margaret Havard (*née* Powell). Between 1799 and 1934, 135 years, there were exactly 1500 baptisms in the Brecon district. The list of priests is complete from 1788 and comprises fourteen names, of which the first is John Williams ; nine of them are of indubitable Welshmen, two being converts, Joseph Jones (1850-51) and J. P. Gildas Davies (1857-64) ; Mr. Jones (" Caradog ") was a converted Wesleyan minister, who was first given charge of a temporary mission to railway workers at Abergele and was later at Wrexham. There are several names well known in other parts of South Wales, such as Father Edward Richards, o.s.f., (1819-23), Mr. George Gildart (1824-25), Mgr. Peter Lewis (1851-56), and Canon John Griffiths (1895-1912). Three of them were Havards, namely, Lewis (1817-18, 1831-45), his nephew, also Lewis (1845-50, 1864-71), and Michael (1825-30). Lewis Havard junior is written of very sympathetically in Poole's *History of Brecknockshire* (1886), where he is referred to as " a venerable Welshman whose life and work were in many respects remarkable ". He died at the English College in Lisbon in 1880, and the writer goes on : " The death of the Rev. Father Havard is the severance of perhaps the last link which connected the present time with a period at which only one or two occasional missionary priests represented the ecclesiastical organization of the Catholic Church in Wales. . . . In the latter part of the 18th century " Father Havard's father and uncle went to Douay but had to come home owing to the French Revolution. Subsequently the uncle " was enabled to take orders. Like his immediate predecessors in the Catholic mission of S. Wales, he used to strap his vestments and communion

plate on his back, and make frequent journeys on foot from Brecknock to Abergavenny, and other neighbouring towns, for the purpose of ministering to a few scattered adherents of his church in the early days of the present century. The later Father Havard, who was born on the 27th July, 1807, succeeded to his uncle's toilsome work, which certainly required a good deal of enthusiasm to make its performance possible. . . . He has left few priests behind him who possess the same command over the Welsh language in preaching. Indeed, those who knew him intimately, and who speak with warmth of his deep faith and unaffected piety, declare that in no Welshman could the love of his native land be stronger than it was in Father Havard " (p. 297). Lewis Havard, senior, was buried in Brecon priory churchyard, and Michael is said to lie at Talgarth.

At the end of the eighteenth century Mass was said at Brecon in a private house, which in 1805 was sold and is now the Baptist chapel in Watergate Street. With the proceeds the Rev. John Williams bought the Three Cocks inn at the top of St. Michael's Street, and this served as a meeting-place for Catholics until the present church of St. Michael was built and opened in 1851, principally at the cost of Mr. Howard of Corby. But it appears, on the evidence of Mr. Daniel Leonard, who was born in 1850 and was probably the first person to be baptized in St. Michael's, and is still living, that Mass was also said in a tollet (hay-loft) behind the two cottages that are now made into one and numbered 4, St. Michael's Street. The buildings here are worth examination. Brecon remained untouched by the industrial revolution, and in Mgr. Baines's report of 1838 it was credited with only 65 Catholics ; in 1845

there were 100 (excluding soldiers stationed at the barracks), almost entirely Welsh—"the only mission of the kind now existing", comments the *Catholic Directory*; in the next five years the total in the town rose to 120, and Mass was offered also at Senni where, with Abermarlais and Craig y Nos, there was another 100. To-day there are over 400 faithful in a parish which includes *Hay** and *Talgarth*, in both of which places Mass is now celebrated, in a rented room at the one and usually in the asylum at the other. Much of this progress is due to the energy and enterprise of Canon W. F. Finucane, who has been the parish priest since 1912.

The most distinguished parishioner of Brecon in modern times was Adelina Patti, who was married in St. Michael's church to her third husband, Baron Cederström, and lived for years at Craig y Nos Castle, where she died in 1919.† This mansion was built by a Welsh Catholic, Rhys Powell, in 1842.

Some seven or eight miles to the north-west of Brecon are two secluded farms which are held by the diocesan trustees for the support of the parish and priest; they are known as Bolomaen and Glandwr. Two Havards of Bolomaen were confirmed by Mgr. Baines, as coadjutor of Mgr. Collingridge, in 1823, and these farms were given as an endowment by the Thomas Havard who helped Mr. Williams to

* In Welsh *Y Gelli Gandryll*; often erroneously called "the Welsh Hay", which is really the neighbouring Llanigon. *Y Gelli* is "the English Hay".

† Sarah Siddons (*née* Kemble) was born at the Shoulder of Mutton inn at Brecon in 1755. She was the great-great-grandniece of Blessed John Kemble and is said to have given money for the upkeep of his grave at Welsh Newton. Father Abbot, priest at Monmouth (d. 1904), knew a Mrs Stead who remembered Mrs Siddons visiting the grave and composing a poem about it when she was at Monmouth with her company in 1805.

buy the ground for the present church. Among the benefactors of the mission in the earlier part of last century were members of the Heneage family, for whom twelve Masses are still offered annually. "The further obligation of recommending all other Benefactors of the Congregation to the prayers of the Faithful every Sunday and Holiday before Mass, and also of making a memento of all Benefactors *living and dead* every time the Divine Mysteries are celebrated, was enjoined *in perpetuum* by the Right Rev. Dr. P. Collingridge, V.A. of this district. Ita testor: L. Havard. 1817."

HOLYWELL

THE SEVEN WONDERS OF WALES

Pistyll Rhaeadr and Wrexham steeple,
 Snowdon's mountain, without its people,
 Overton yew-trees, Saint Winefride's wells,
 Llangollen bridge and Gresford bells.

(*Old rime*).

The legend of St. Winefride (in Welsh she is called Gwenfrewi, a quite different name), who lived at the beginning of the seventh century, states that she was a disciple of St. Beuno when he was living at Sychnant, the "dry valley" at the foot of the hill whereon the town of Holywell (*Treffynnon*, "Springtown") now stands. One day, when her parents were at Mass, there came to the house Caradog, prince of Penarlâg (Hawarden), who molested the girl, and she fled down the hill towards Beuno's chapel. Caradog pursued her sword in hand and revengefully smote off her head, and where it fell a spring of water gushed out—Winefride's well. St. Beuno restored head and life to

Winefride and called down the anger of Heaven upon Caradog, who fell dead at his feet. Winefride established a convent of nuns on her father's land, and after some years moved to Gwytherin near the source of the river Elwy, where her aunt St. Tenoï had a convent ; here she lived the rest of her life and died. Unfortunately, the authorities for the details of the story of St. Winefride are very far from good. The Bollandist fathers do not give her the style of martyr and suggest that she was only wounded by Caradog ; the English supplement to the Roman Breviary, on the other hand, speaks of her martyrdom but is silent about the supposed restoration of life. However, the suggestion that she is an entirely mythical personage (which has been made) has no longer any support from impartial scholars.*

In 1138 the alleged relics of St. Winefride were translated to the Benedictine abbey church at Shrewsbury, where her shrine was destroyed at the dissolution. In 1093 the church and fountain of Holywell were given by Adeliza, Countess of Chester to St. Werburg's Abbey at Chester, but some years later Prince David ap Llywelyn ab Iorwerth transferred them to the Cistercians of Basingwerk, who guarded them until 1537. During the closing years of the fifteenth century the Lady Margaret Beaufort, mother of King Henry VII Tudor, with the co-operation of Pennants, Lewises, and other Welsh families set up the buildings over the spring of which considerable parts still remain. They are now the property of the town of Holywell ; the

* In 1712 Father Philip Metcalf, s.j., priest at Holywell, rewrote and published an earlier Life of St. Winefride. This was edited with notes by Father Herbert Thurston, s.j., and reprinted by the Catholic Truth Society in 1917 at the expense of Anna Maria, Lady Mostyn. I have made much use of this valuable publication.

pilgrims' chapel is used by the Protestant Church of Wales, but the spring itself and its other immediate surroundings have for many years been let at an annual rent (now £125) to the local Catholic clergy.

The well, which is really the head-waters of a stream and has no known medicinal properties, has been a pilgrim shrine for many ages: the earliest recorded miraculous cures date from the twelfth century. The feast of St. Winefride was kept throughout the ecclesiastical province of Canterbury in the fifteenth century, and Pope Martin V granted an indulgence to the chapel of one year and forty days, which was renewed by Paul IV in 1555 at the request of Bishop Goldwell of Saint Asaph, who encouraged the pilgrimage. And that pilgrimage has never ceased, even in the darkest days of persecution, and has indeed in some sort been maintained by Protestants too. On the saint's feast-day in 1629 it was estimated that 1400 or 1500 pilgrims and sightseers, with a number of priests, were present, and Father Metcalf in his *Life* gives particulars of several cures of disease effected there between 1606 and 1667.* King James II visited the well the year before he was driven from his throne, and in 1713 the Protestant Bishop of Saint Asaph complained that "great resort is had to Holywell by pilgrims, as they call them, from all the different quarters of the kingdom, and even from Ireland". Mrs. Thrale in 1774 deplored "the devastation committed by Puritanism, which in its zeal has battered poor St. Winefride", but that zeal was insufficient to deter her devotees, for "a woman bathed while we all looked on", says Dr. Johnson, the

* To confute those who maintained that "the stupendious Cures wrought at her *Well*, are nothing else but the experienc'd Effects of a *Cold Bath*"! Blessed Edward Oldcorne, s.j., (h.d.q. 1606) had a gangrenous sore in his mouth cured at Holywell.

bath being "completely and indecently open". Mgr. Milner, vicar apostolic of the Midland district, wrote a pamphlet (an exercise to which he was very addicted) in defence of the cure of a Wolverhampton girl, Winefride White, in 1805, and there were further cures throughout the nineteenth century.* "The supposed sanative virtues of these waters, from their professed miraculous origin, formerly attracted numerous pilgrims; and St. Winefride's well was looked upon with the eye of credulity as another Bethesda. Here all kinds of infirmities, to which poor corporeal man is incident, received a healing power; and, *to the present day*, crutches, barrows, and other votive offerings, as trophies of the astonishing cures performed, are placed in a pendent position over the well" (Gastineau's *Wales Illustrated*, 1829). There are said to have been 10,000 pilgrims in 1811. The *Holywell Pilgrims' Record* for 1934 gives brief particulars of some cures or alleviations reported in the previous year, with the physician's certificate concerning a specially notable one in 1925.

For at least a hundred and fifty years during penal times there were two Catholic missions in Holywell, in charge of secular priests and of Jesuits, who had their headquarters at two inns, respectively the Cross Keys and the Old Star.† Between 1730 and the end of the century their baptismal registers (published by

* Eight of them were examined by Father Michael Maher, s.j., in the *Month* for February, 1895. Father Thurston refers to more recent ones, *op. cit.*

† In 1718 there was an official raid by dragoons on "two popish chapels at Holywell in which Mass was publicly performed . . . many of the popish noblemen and gentlemen were at this time there, being near the feast of St. Winefride . . . the vast number of miners in that neighbourhood were papists." The priest at the Cross Keys, Mr. Wilmot, was arrested while saying Mass.

the Catholic Record Society, vol. III) record mostly Welsh names, with a few noted as Irish; from 1800 to 1829 foreign names increase rapidly.

The first recorded secular priest there was the English martyr Blessed John Plesington (h.d.q. 1679), from 1665 till 1676. There were eight others, five of them Welsh. Philip Jones, Clytha, who became priest there in 1800, left a legacy to the mission by will. His successor, George Thomas Gildart, with the permission of the vicar apostolic Mgr. Sharrock, closed the secular mission, since there was no need for two in the town. He sold the Cross Keys and went to live at Monmouth in 1802, transferring the proceeds of the sale and the other endowments thither. The inn was pulled down and a dwelling-house built in its place, which in 1859 became part of the convent of the Sisters of Charity of St. Paul, who now have also a hospice for pilgrims in New Road. According to Father Thomas Abbot the old chasuble at Monmouth belonged to two priests at Holywell who were brothers, named Jones. In a letter to Hobson Matthews in 1903 he stated that the elder of these brothers acted as landlord and the younger as ostler of the Cross Keys, and that they left Holywell about 1720: but their names do not appear in the list of secular incumbents.

The coming of the Jesuits to Holywell is referred to elsewhere (see p. 172); of the nineteen priests recorded as in charge between 1580 and Emancipation nine seem to have been Welsh. The Old Star, like the Cross Keys, stood in Well Street. It is not known when it ceased to be used as an inn, but in 1808 the clerk of the peace for the county of Flint issued a magistrates' certificate "for religious worship for persons professing the Roman Catholic religion" in

respect of the charming little building which is now part of the presbytery and on the site of the Old Star.

In 1831 Holywell had a matter of some 9,000 inhabitants and reckoned itself "first in the principality of Wales, both in a commercial and manufacturing point of view"; it had lead, calamine, and copper mines as well as "numerous poor" (who were "very properly regulated and provided for") and also a considerable number of Catholics "amongst whom are several eminent and wealthy families, not less distinguished for their private virtues than public patriotism". These virtuous folk provided themselves with a new church in 1833, in place of the chapel just referred to; it is the present church of St. Winefride, which was enlarged in 1909. In 1838 there were 300 Catholics at Holywell. Two Catholic families of importance in this neighbourhood were the Graingers and Parrys of Twysog, Denbighshire. There is a memorial in the Holywell church "to the memory of Mary Anne Parry, widow of Charles Sankey. She was the last descendant of the Parrys of Twysog, who were one of the two families who kept the faith through the persecutions of the 16th and 17th centuries". Mrs. Sankey was born in 1791 and died in 1881, and her husband is mentioned in connection with the beginnings of the modern church in the town of Denbigh.

Outstanding among the later Jesuit parish priests here was Father Charles Beauclerk (1890-98). He began the daily services at the well and organized the first public processions; at the Guild of Ransom pilgrimage on Whitsunday 1896 the statue of our Lady was carried through the High Street for the first time. He too was responsible for the New Hall, for the statues of the Sacred Heart and of St. Winefride, and

for the banners painted by the unhappy and unfortunate Frederick Rolfe ("Baron Corvo"). An indication of the popularity of the pilgrimage under Father Beauclerk's administration can be found in the fact that over 10,000 votive candles were burned at the shrine in the year 1893, 20,000 in 1894, and 30,000 in 1895; and the railway company recorded a total of 96,000 tickets collected at Holywell station in 1894-95-96. Cures were multiplied and noised abroad. On the whole the local people viewed this activity with favour, but there was not wanting opposition and it was not always either conscientious or scrupulous. Since Father Beauclerk's time the number of pilgrimages, individual or organized, has greatly increased, and especially on the feast of the Assumption crowds of Catholics flock from the south Lancashire towns. Though the "season" is nominally from Whitsunday till the end of September few winter months pass without some visitors; between April 16 and October 22, 1933, there were nearly 70 parties (sometimes several in one day) numbering from 12 people (Stourbridge) to 500 (Nottingham diocese). In the same year, during St. Winefride's feast and its octave till the actual anniversary date (November 3-13), the centenary of the church was celebrated with much solemnity.

In 1903 alarm was caused by danger of the waters of the spring being drained away at their underground source by mining operations. The matter was immediately taken up with great energy and enthusiasm by Lady Mostyn, widow of Sir Pyers William Mostyn of Talacre, and with the help of the Duke of Norfolk and others a vote of Parliament was obtained restricting the area within which tunnelling might be carried out.*

* At the national *eisteddfod* at Rhyl in 1904 Lady Mostyn was admitted as a bard in recognition of her services. Her title was *Rhiain y Ffynnon*, "Lady of the Well".

Lady Mostyn died in 1916 and soon after the flow of water began to decrease ; by the beginning of the next year it had dried up completely. It was a disaster not only for the Catholic body but for the town at large, for the stream which ran from the spring to the Dee two miles away was the principal water supply of the place. Eventually the water was induced to flow again, from its original source but by a different channel, being conducted to a reservoir through a disused mine-shaft and thence by pipes to the well. Unfortunately a neighbouring textile mill also has a claim on this supply, which tends in times of water shortage to lead to friction.

In 1930 the parish of Holywell was handed over to the care of the secular clergy by the Society of Jesus, after its fathers had been established there for exactly three hundred and fifty years.

Other places where there has been continuity of Catholics down to the present day are Usk (Welsh *Brynbuga*), and Chepstow (*Casgwent*).

There is little known of the earlier history of the *Usk* mission. Blessed David Lewis was executed on August 27, 1679, on or near the site of the present Catholic church, and his grave is on the north side of the path leading to the west door of the parish church. He used to celebrate Mass at a house in Bridge Street, which after his martyrdom was forfeited to the Crown and given to Lord Delamere. During the eighteenth century Mass was celebrated in the house of the Davies family, Llancaio, by a secular priest from Llanarth ; about 1800 Usk was given a resident pastor and in 1806 a public chapel was built, which Mgr. Collingridge

reported seven years later to be served from Llanarth, alternately with Newport. In 1827 the resident priest was D. L. Morton, who also served Newport, Cardiff, and Pontypool, and was liable to be woken in the night by a sick-call from anything up to twenty-five miles away on horse-back. In 1838 there were 76 souls in the mission, which included Caerleon. The present church of St. Francis Xavier was built in 1847 ; it possesses a sixteenth-century chasuble whose orphries had to be remounted some years ago on a new vestment. The outstanding figure at Usk during the nineteenth century was Dom Peter Wilson, titular cathedral prior of Ely. He took charge of the mission in 1854 at the age of fifty-five, after having been prior of Downside, and worked there with great zeal for twenty years, when he retired to end his days in his monastery. Another notable priest was Dr. Thomas Rooker, vicar general to Mgr. Brown.

At *Chepstow* the Joneses, Davieses, and others had been served by the Franciscans from Perthîr during the eighteenth century. In 1812 a secular priest was sent there, when there were 50 Catholics, and in 1827 Mgr. Collingridge decided to build a permanent church in Welsh Street. At a time when some of the missionary priests were very unsatisfactory Chepstow was fortunate in being ministered to by the Rev. John Williams, of Bath (he lived to be one of the first canons of the Clifton chapter), and by 1838 he had 118 souls in his congregation. The bishop wanted him to serve Newport and offered £25 to buy a new horse, but Mr. Williams declined on account of his bad health, so the charge of Newport was for the time being committed to Usk. Chepstow now has a chapel-of-ease at *Caldicot*.

CHAPTER IV

THE OLD FAMILIES

OF the Welsh or marcher families of *boneddigion* who maintained the Faith into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries or later, Powels and Lorymers of Perthâr, Prichards of the Graig, Morgans of the Waen, Wigmores, Monningtons, Streets, Jameses of Llansor, Mynors of Treago, Havards, Progers of Wern Ddu, their mansions serving as rallying-points for the scattered and unorganized Catholics, only three are still represented on the spot by congregations to-day : Herberts and Joneses of Llanarth, Mostyns of Talacre, and Vaughans of Courtfield.

The illustrious clan of *Herbert* is descended from Gwilym ap Jenkin, lord of Wern Ddu near Abergavenny in the middle of the fourteenth century,* the senior families becoming known as Proger (extinct 1780), Jones of Treowen and Llanarth, Powel of Perthâr (extinct c. 1750), Hughes of Cillwch, Morgan of Arkstone, and Vaughan of Courtfield. The name Herbert came in *temp.*, Edward IV, when a royal commission of Welsh herald-bards discovered an apparently spurious descent of Gwilym ap Jenkin from Henry I's chamberlain Henry fitz Herbert, in favour of

* Caradog Freichfras, counsellor of King Arthur, friend of St. Padarn, and progenitor of the princely houses of Brycheiniog and Morgannwg, is claimed as an ultimate ancestor of the Herberts, as of the Mostyns.

Gwilym's descendant William, Earl of Pembroke ; henceforward several branches of the clan, most of them cadet or of illegitimate origin, adopted the name and arms of Herbert.

The line of Llanarth became lords of that place, which lies between Abergavenny and Monmouth, in 1465 and adopted the cognomen Jones in 1587. Their loyalty to the Church involved them in repeated fines and persecution during penal times, but they were not dislodged and their domestic chapel was in continuous use as a meeting-place for the faithful from Elizabeth's time on. Mass used to be celebrated in the chapel of Hendreobeith (Llanarth Court) until about 1750, when a new chapel, " of St. Mary and St. Michael ", was built in the grounds : it was made somewhat to resemble a barn, lest it should provoke violence. In the latter part of the eighteenth century Llanarth was the headquarters of the secular clergy in South Wales, and Mgr. Sharrock resided there for some years while coadjutor of the Western district. The family continually appears as a benefactor of Catholic charities, especially by the purchase of land for chapels. The local registers are extant and printed from 1781 to 1838 (Catholic Record Society, vol. III), showing that the Catholics were still thoroughly Welsh, as they long remained ; they numbered 150 in 1813 and 210 ten years after Emancipation.

In 1848 Mr. John Arthur Edward Jones of Llanarth reverted to the name given to his collateral ancestor the Earl of Pembroke and became Herbert by licence from the Crown. He married the Hon. Augusta Charlotte Hall, daughter of Baron Llanover (better known as Sir Benjamin Hall, the whig politician). Her mother, " old Lady Llanover ", is still affectionately remem-

bered and justly held in admiration on account of her active devotion to the language and culture of her native land. Thanks to her, Llanofor maintained all its proper Welshness unimpaired ; her children were brought up to speak their natural tongue in everyday life ; the traditional observances and ways of living were kept up whole-heartedly and without " revivalistic " fuss ; versifying, *pennillion* singing, and playing on the harp were held in honour as common accomplishments in which all, gentry and commons, should be proficient. The Hon. Augusta Hall became a Catholic on her marriage to Mr. Herbert, and followed her mother's example by keeping up the Welsh tradition first at Llanarth and then at Llanofor, where she had a private chapel after her husband's death. She herself was distinguished for her numerous charities, and died in 1912 at the age of eighty-eight.

The heir of J.A.E. and Augusta Herbert was their eldest son, Ivor John Caradoc, who was born in 1851 and succeeded in 1895, and during his mother's lifetime he seconded her efforts to conserve the old ways of life at Llanarth and Llanofor.* After a long and notable military career Colonel Herbert was created baronet, and sat in the House of Commons as Liberal member for the South Monmouthshire division from 1906 till 1917. In that year he was created a baron of the United Kingdom with the title of Treowen. Lord Treowen married the Hon. Albertina Denison, daughter of the first Lord Londesborough, but their only son was killed during the World War and the barony of Treowen

* It was Lord Treowen who in 1918 with Mrs Gruffydd Richards (Pencerddes y De) and others recalled and established the now famous Welsh dance the " Llanofor Reel ", which they had danced at Llanofor Court fifty years before when Mrs Richards's father, Thomas Gruffydd, was harper there.

became extinct at the death of the first holder in 1933.

Lord Treowen's heiress was his daughter Fflorens Mary Ursula, who married Mr. Walter Roch, m.p., in 1911. The Hon. Mrs. Roch occupies Llanarth Court and maintains the church and parish there as heretofore. The local faithful now number 60, but they are no longer specifically Welsh and the members of the Herbert family are the only indigenous hereditary Welsh Catholics. They include Major J. A. Herbert, m.p., the only son of Lord Treowen's second brother, Sir Arthur Herbert, Coldbrook, and the present owner of Llanofer; the Hon Mrs Bleiddian Herbert, Trebencyn, widow of Lieutenant-Colonel E. B. Herbert, Lord Treowen's youngest brother; Brigadier-General E. A. Herbert, of Moynes Court, Chepstow, the only son of Major Edmund P. Herbert of Llansantffraid Court; Miss Gwladys Herbert, Clytha; and Mrs. C. Herbert, Ty Gwyn.

The *Mostyns* are descended from Tewdwr Trefor, "Lord of Hereford, Whittington, and both Mylors, Founder of the Tribe of the Marches", who married Angharad, daughter of the tenth-century prince Howel the Good, through whom they trace their line to Rhodri Mawr and Caradog Freichfras. A descendant from this union was Iorwerth Fychan, who married a niece of the "last Llywelyn", ab Gruffydd, and their fourth grandson Edynfed Gam was lord of Pengwern, near Llangollen, which was held by the Mostyns till the middle of the nineteenth century. Ieuan Fychan of Pengwern married Angharad, heiress of Hywel ab Tewdwr ab Ithel Fychan, lord of Mostyn in Tegeingl, and so brought Mostyn into his family; their grandson

Richard was a faithful supporter of Henry VII Tudor, but refused to follow him to court : " I live ", he said, " among my own people ". This Richard had two sons, of whom the elder, Thomas, inherited Mostyn, which eventually fell to a female heir who married a Lloyd who later assumed the name of Mostyn ; his heir was created Baron Mostyn of Mostyn. The younger son of Richard, Pyers, inherited Talacre, and his lines of the family remained Catholic at the Reformation and have continued so.

Talacre, which lies a little inland from the coast of Flintshire near Prestatyn, has been a Mostyn estate since the fifteenth century and is one of the two places in North Wales where the Holy Sacrifice has been offered uninterruptedly ; its domestic chapel was a centre for local Catholics throughout the days of persecution, though owing to the proximity of Holywell it never had the importance that Llanarth had in the south. In 1670 Edward Mostyn of Talacre was created baronet. Two of his sons became Jesuits and worked on the mission in England at the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth : they were Father John (d. 1721) and Father Andrew (d. 1709). They had two sisters who were Carmelites at Lierre in Flanders (the community is now at Darlington) ; one of them was the well-known Mother Margaret, whose Life was written by Canon Edmund Bedingfeld and edited by Father Henry J. Coleridge, s.j., in 1878 : three of her nieces and two great-nieces also became Carmelites, and between them they directed the convent for over fifty years. A daughter of the second baronet married John Hornyold of Blackmore Park and became the mother of Mgr. John Hornyold, vicar apostolic of the Midland district and

president and saviour of Challoner's school at Sedgley Park. The third baronet, Sir Pyers, was himself a Jesuit, and at his death on the Wigan mission in 1735 the title passed to his brother.

Charles Mostyn, second son of the fifth baronet, Sir Edward, assumed the additional name of Browne on inheriting his mother's estates, and it is a descendant of him who holds the barony of Vaux of Harrowden, which was called out of abeyance in 1838. Charles Browne Mostyn's third son, Francis George, was vicar apostolic of the Northern district from 1840 to 1847. He is described in a document of the Congregation of Propaganda as a man of "exceeding piety, competent learning, and much zeal", but unfortunately his health gave way in 1843 and a coadjutor had to be appointed.

The Mostyns have the blood of several of the English martyrs, including Blessed Philip Howard, Blessed William Howard, and Blessed Margaret Pole; through the last-named they are co-heirs of the Plantagenets and entitled to the Plantagenet armorial supporters.

The eighth baronet, Sir Pyers, married the Hon. Frances Fraser, daughter of the fourteenth Baron Lovat. Their fourth son was Francis Joseph Mostyn, the progress of the Church in Wales under whose leadership as vicar apostolic, bishop of Menevia, and archbishop of Cardiff is set out in other places in this book. The present head of the Mostyns of Talacre is Sir Pyers Mostyn, eleventh baronet, who succeeded his cousin in 1917.

In 1920 Talacre itself was sold to the Benedictine nuns of Milford Haven (see p. 202), and so the unbroken Catholic tradition of the place is carried on. The present parish priest of Haverfordwest, the Rev. John

Mostyn, K.M., Ph.D., D.C.L., is the fourth son of the late Colonel E. J. Mostyn, of Arundel, and cousin to Mgr. Mostyn of Cardiff.

The family of *Vaughan** is a branch of the Herbert clan. In the time of Queen Elizabeth, James Vaughan of Llangadog feibion Afel married Sybil, co-heiress of John ap Gwilyn of Welsh Bicknor, and their son William inherited Courtfield, which is the mansion of the manor of Welsh Bicknor (formerly a member of the lordship of Monmouth, but now in Herefordshire). From that time to this Courtfield has been the home of the Catholic Vaughans, who for generations sustained crushing fines, molestation, imprisonment, and double land-tax because of their faith.

The first recorded act of persecution was in 1605 when the widow of William Vaughan of Llanrothal† was prosecuted for attending Mass at the Darren, in the Monnow valley, and in the same year four members of the family were fined for recusancy. The fourth squire of Courtfield, Richard, is named in the recusant lists from 1648 till 1690, and his younger brother Thomas was a missionary priest for many years; Challoner says that though he "did not suffer at the common place of execution he was nevertheless a martyr for his character and religion", and he seems in fact to have died as the result of rough handling on board ship at Cardiff, between 1640 and 1650. After the usurpation of William of Orange, Richard and his second wife, Agatha Berington, suffered much indignity for sheltering a Jesuit priest, James Richardson, at Courtfield.

* The name, anglicized from Bychan, *i.e.*, the younger, comes from Thomas ap Gwilym Fychan of Llanrothal.

† The parish church of Llanrothal (Llanrhyddol) was the last wherein Mass was celebrated in this part of Wales.

Richard's son John (who inherited the estates of the Vaughans of Ruardean and Clyro) united two chief branches of the Herberts by marrying as his second wife Elizabeth Jones of Llanarth, thus bringing the blood of Blessed Margaret Pole into the Courtfield descent. He refused to take the oath of allegiance to the Hanoverian kings and two of his sons, Richard and William, fought for Prince Charles Edward Stuart at Culloden and were outlawed. They were excluded by name from the general pardon of 1747 and went into exile in Spain, where they had distinguished military careers. The elder, Richard, married Francisca Fuort y Magueier, a descendant of four great Irish families, Ford of Munster, mac Mahon and Maguire of Ulster, and o'Neill.* Their son William returned to Monmouthshire and his son, also William, grandfather of Cardinal Vaughan, built the present house at Courtfield in 1805.

The registers of the chapel at Courtfield from 1773 to 1832 (printed by the Catholic Record Society, vol. IV) contain, as is only natural from its situation, a large proportion of English names throughout, and the Welsh language probably died out in Welsh Bicknor a good hundred and fifty years back. But it is a very significant fact that twenty years ago old people there still spoke of the Catholic chapel as "the Welsh church" and of the Protestant church as "the English church". The list of chaplains dates only from 1804, but it is known that there has been a continuous succession of priests at Courtfield from early in the seventeenth century. In 1813 there were 30 Catholics in the district and 100 in 1838.

* For this interesting genealogical point and much that precedes I am indebted to J. H. Matthews's *Vaughans of Courtfield* (London, 1912).

The last mentioned William Vaughan married Teresa Maria Weld of Lulworth, and they had seven children: William became bishop of Plymouth in 1855, Richard was a Jesuit, Edmund a Redemptorist, and two of the daughters nuns. The heir, Colonel John Francis Vaughan, married firstly Eliza Louisa Rolls of the Hendre, and it is difficult to know which of these two sterling characters evokes the greater admiration. If there were some to whom Colonel Vaughan seemed a hard man, they did not include that one of his tenants, James Lewis, who bequeathed "all my real estate (having no near relatives of my own) to my good and kind master John Francis Vaughan" (recorded by Matthews). Mrs. Vaughan, a convert to Catholicism, was beautiful alike in body and spirit and left the reputation of a saint, and a lovable saint. It is well known that she prayed that all her numerous children should devote their lives to the service of God as clergy or nuns and in the event six of her eight sons and all five daughters did so: Roger (Bede) became archbishop of Sydney, John titular bishop of Sebastopolis, Joseph (Jerome) prior of Fort Augustus, Bernard a Jesuit, Kenelm a secular priest.

The eldest son was Cardinal Herbert Vaughan, third Archbishop of Westminster. He wrote at the age of twenty, "How many years, ever since I first made up my mind to consecrate myself to the priesthood and the Welsh mission . . . I have regretted my unacquaintance with the Welsh language", and there are other references in his diary to "my own desolate diocese", to himself as a "poor missionary in Wales", and to God's possible use of him as an instrument in her conversion, up to the very eve of his ordination. But

it was not to be : when, within a few months of his becoming a priest in 1854, he accepted the vice-presidency of St. Edmund's College at Old Hall he took the first step in the illustrious career that was to be devoted to the Church not in Wales but in England.

Mr. J. G. Snead-Cox speaks of him as saying vehemently while on a visit to Courtfield in 1887, " Why should it be a pleasure to come here ? The whole place is peopled with the dead ; there is a ghost at every turn ; it is like coming back to a land of tombs ; every field, every lane, every tree reminds me of those who have gone before." It is not fanciful to think that the then Bishop of Salford was referring not solely to those whom he had known in the flesh, but was moved also by that *hiraeth*, home-sickness for Wales as Wales, that few of her exiled children ever lose.

Colonel J. F. Vaughan (" the old Colonel ") was succeeded at Courtfield by his fifth son, Francis Baynham, and during his time, in 1881, a new chapel, " of our Lady ", was opened there for the use both of the family and the general congregation. The youngest of the eight sons went to live at Glantrothy, where there has been a mission since 1885, served from Belmont Abbey.

The present squire of Courtfield is Major Charles Jerome Vaughan, o.b.e., d.l., j.p., lord of the manors of Welsh Bicknor and Ruardean, privy chamberlain to Pope Pius XI and his two predecessors. The elder of his two brothers, Dr. Herbert Vaughan, was well known as superior of the Catholic Missionary Society, London, while the younger, Francis, was in 1926 appointed bishop of Menevia—a most gratifying event in the age-long association of his family with Catholicism in Wales.

Though not of an old Welsh Catholic family, mention must be made here of the third Marquess of Bute, who was connected on the distaff side with the Herberts. The fourth Earl and first Marquess of Bute, whose forbear John Stuart had been created hereditary sheriff of Bute, Arran, and Cumbrae, with lands in those islands, by his father King Robert II of Scotland, married in 1766 the heiress of Viscount Windsor. He thus brought great estates in Glamorgan into his family, estates which his father-in-law had inherited from the Herberts, Earls of Pembroke, and was created Baron Cardiff of Cardiff Castle in consequence by George III. In 1847 there was born at Mountstuart John Patrick Crichton-Stuart, fifteenth in descent from John Stuart, who at six months old became the third Marquess. While at Oxford he was convinced of the truth of Catholicism but pressure from his relatives and from the Court of Chancery induced him to delay his submission until he came of age. Though he often affirmed that "Bute is my real home", he for many years took a prominent part in the public life of Cardiff and was sincerely interested in Wales. He took the trouble to learn Welsh, and was a familiar figure at the national *eisteddfodau*,* where he twice read papers; he also subsidized the Cymmrodorion Society's publications and enabled the Cardiff library to acquire the Phillipps manuscripts by a subscription of over a quarter of the whole sum required to purchase them.

* The word *eisteddfod* is commonly interpreted as a "sitting" or "session"; a congress of bards and competitive meeting for poets, singers, etc. "The old *eisteddfod y beirdd* was a civil court to regulate the bards and minstrels and to legislate on matters of metre", and so on, but the present form of the institution cannot be traced before 1789: its turgid ritual and pseudo-archaic observances are quite bogus. Local *eisteddfodau* are often very pleasant and impressive festivals.

This marvellous collection of Sir Thomas Phillipps, Bt., included 56 manuscript volumes in Welsh, 384 manuscript volumes relating to Wales, 172 court and manor rolls, *etc.*, and 849 charters and other deeds: the most valuable collection of its kind ever made available for the use of Welsh research.

In 1869 the Marquess aroused a good deal of indignation by founding the *Western Mail* as an "old-fashioned tory" organ, but he took no personal part in the conduct of the paper nor used it as a weapon in civil or ecclesiastical politics. During the industrial troubles of 1873 it demonstrated its genuinely tory (as opposed to "conservative") principles by supporting the working-people. This venture had cost Bute £50,000 by the time he withdrew from it in 1877, and "I don't grudge it," he said. His lavish munificence both towards Catholic and general good works was experienced in every place with which he was connected: at Cardiff he gave a stone screen and rood to St. Peter's church, established the Good Shepherd convent at Penylan, gave a house at Llanishen for the bishop's residence, and land or money for numerous churches; while president of the university college his benefactions totalled over £10,000 and included the characteristic gift of a set of the Bollandist *Acta Sanctorum* for its library; he maintained a hospital at Aberdare and was a great supporter of the Cardiff, Merthyr, and Seamen's general hospitals; when the Jews wanted a new synagogue he granted a lease of his land on specially good terms; and when some tried to hold him liable at the failure of the Cardiff Savings Bank he first cleared himself at law and then gave £3000 to the depositors. He was mayor of Cardiff in 1890-91, the first peer of the realm to undertake municipal office.

Yet the Marquess of Bute was not by nature or inclination a "public man"; rather was he somewhat of a recluse, and his primary interests were in art and scholarship. The buildings for which he was responsible, whether his own castles at Cardiff and Castell Goch or the churches given in various places, show him to have been a true son of the "gothic revival", and the same characteristic is reflected (sometimes rather irritatingly) in his writings. Of these the principal one was the *Roman Breviary translated into English*, a huge undertaking which, now that it has been done again and so much better by the Benedictine dames of Stanbrook, is never likely to be reprinted.

An interesting detail of his administration was his way of dealing with the dozen or more Anglican benefices in Glamorgan and Monmouth of which he was patron. As a Catholic the law did not allow him to present to them, but instead of allowing the presentations to lapse (in this case to the University of Cambridge) he made them over to temporary trustees who were members of the Church of England, and thus was enabled himself to nominate worthy ministers to the livings.

The third Marquess of Bute died at Dumfries House, Ayrshire, in 1900, when he was only fifty-three. He had married in 1872 the Hon. Gwendolen Howard, eldest daughter of the first Lord Howard of Glossop, and was succeeded by the eldest of his three sons, John Crichton-Stuart, the present marquess.

CHAPTER V

THE WESTERN DISTRICT

FROM 1688 until 1840 the Catholics of Wales were under the rule of the vicar apostolic of the Western district,* one of the four vicariates into which England was divided by Pope Innocent XI. Most of these Western vicars resided first at Bath and then at Cannington, near Bridgwater. At the beginning of the nineteenth century there were in the whole of Wales missions only at Holywell, Abergavenny, Perthâr, Monmouth, Brecon, Chepstow, and Usk, with domestic chapels at Talacre, Llanarth, and Courtfield ; scattered Catholics elsewhere had to rely on the ministrations of itinerant missionaries : for example, a Jesuit from Bristol visited Cardiff and the south coast out to Haverfordwest four times a year. The total number of Catholics probably did not exceed a thousand.

As an example—though not a typical one—of an isolated Catholic, mention may be made here of William Owen of Caernarfon, known to his fellows as *y Pabydd*, “the papist”. He was born at Beaumaris about 1786 and after going to the local grammar school joined the Royal Navy, seeing active service during the Napoleonic wars. Later he set up as a printer at

* A vicar apostolic is a titular bishop who is, as his title indicates, a vicar of the Pope. He exercises delegated jurisdiction only, and has neither territorial diocese, cathedral, nor chapter of canons.

Caernarfon, and wrote several historical works in Welsh and English, including *Hanes y Merthyron Catholicaidd ym Mhrydain*, "History of the Catholic Martyrs of Britain", and an account of the Reformation (*Drych Crefyddol* . . . 1825). He was a poor man all his life, and died somewhere about 1869. "Owen was an original and attractive figure, warmly patriotic, combative in spirit, devoted to his antiquarian researches, and credulous and uncritical to the highest degree."*

Mgr. Sharrock died in 1809 and was succeeded as vicar apostolic of the Western district by his coadjutor Mgr. Peter Bernardine Collingridge, o.s.f., who was faced with the new problems raised in south-east Wales by the "industrial revolution". Between the beginning of the eighteenth and the middle of the nineteenth century the quiet hills and valleys of Glamorgan and western Monmouthshire were changed, gradually at first, swiftly later, from the sparsely populated home of an age-long pastoral people to pretty much what we know to-day. From the "poorest" it became the wealthiest district in Great Britain—but the wealth was all in the hands of a few Bristol and London merchants and English and Scottish ironmasters, financiers, and companies: few of those who here remorselessly exploited natural resources and human needs for their personal gain were native Welshmen. In 1801 the combined population of these two counties was 126,000, in 1841 it was 305,000; Cardiff increased from 2000 to 10,000, Newport from 1000 to 12,000, Merthyr Tydfil from 8000 to 35,000; 32 ironworks and 6 copperworks had been set up, and the invention of

* J. E. Lloyd in his *Owen Glendower* (Oxford, 1931), the source of this note. William Owen wrote a history of Glyndŵr in which he made use of some apparently good authority no longer available.

the steam-locomotive was soon to make coal-mining the biggest industry of all.* To describe the conditions in which these people lived is not within the scope of this book ; objective and reliable accounts of their horrors and foul injustices can be read in the reports of the government commissions that were eventually set up to examine the state of employment in mines (1841), of industrial towns (1845), of education (1847) : and the general level of the morality of the victims was what might be expected from human beings who were not treated by their masters even with the respect due to the beasts that perish.

Local available labour was not of course sufficient for industrial requirements and the growth in population was due to immigration from other parts of Wales, from England, from Cornwall, and from Ireland. Of these elements the Irish were the most wretched and pitiable—they were the furthest from their home and the most strange to the others. National rivalries and prejudices were inevitable, and those between Welsh and Irish were the bitterest and the most lasting. Both sides were quarrelsome and excitable, and the Welsh, after a century of the Methodist Revival,† were horrified by this incursion of people who professed “popery” ; the Irish, on the other hand, were just as ignorant and prejudiced about Protestantism, and

* The Dowlais ironworks was opened in 1758, the Cyfarthfa ironworks in 1765, and the Bute Docks in 1839. The first cargo of steam-coal left Cardiff in 1840.

† Rather unhappily named. The chief Welsh dissenting body though called Calvinistic Methodist is not a Wesleyan body, to which alone the name of methodist rightly belongs : it is presbyterian and Calvinist, deriving from the preaching of Griffith Jones of Llandowror (d. 1761) and Howell Harris of Trefecca (d. 1773), and declared a separate body under Thomas Charles of Bala in 1811. The Welsh dissenters were rigidly Tory in politics down to about the time of the Chartist riots.

referred to the religion of those in whose country they lived with noisy contempt. The hostility of the Welsh was increased by the fact that the Irish were definitely "cheap labour"; they were regarded as blacklegs and wage-cutters and, in spite of the feverish activity of Feargus o'Connor, very many of them refused to join in the troubles raised by the Chartist demands for justice. This made them particularly unpopular at Newport and at Pontypool, where a large number of Irish were employed at the Farteg ironworks. It was to relieve the spiritual, social, and material distress of these foreign Catholics in his vicariate that Mgr. Collingridge set himself.* For fifteen years he and his clergy grappled with a situation that frequently threatened to overwhelm them.

The first new mission that he succeeded in establishing was *Swansea* (Abertawe), which was then still partly a seaside resort, though the Swansea Harbour Trust was formed in 1791 and copper-smelting had been in operation for seventy-five years. Sometime about 1797 the itinerant Jesuit from Bristol, Father Robert Plowden, had made a chapel in part of an old church, and a French *émigré* priest, abbé Sejean, established himself here in 1804. As he knew little English and less Welsh he was occasionally helped by Mr. Williams from Brecon and Mr. Spooner from Chepstow. With the aid of subscriptions from England a chapel was fitted up in 1813, but when M. Sejean returned to France at the restoration of the monarchy and his duties were taken over by his auxiliary John

* Even at this time the south Wales Irish were not all "submerged". A radical newspaper called the *Merlin* was edited and printed by Irishmen, and the name of J. B. o'Brien was almost as prominent on the side of "moral force" Chartism as o'Connor on the "physical force" side.

Williams, Swansea became dependent upon Brecon, forty miles away over the mountains. In 1825 it was given a resident priest again. By 1838, when the Rev. W. P. Bond was in charge, there were 400 Catholics, and nine years later the chapel of St. David had to be rebuilt bigger. Of the beginnings at Newport mention will be made later on. In the meanwhile the workers at the ironworks of *Pontypool* were getting Mass once a week from Usk, and it was not till 1844 that they had a small chapel and presbytery of their own. *Cardiff* (Caerdydd) was served first from Usk and later from Merthyr, the mission dating from about 1825: Mass was celebrated in inns and other odd places until 1842, when a church was built on the site of the present St. David's cathedral. *Merthyr Tydfil* had a large Irish colony, for whom Mass was said there for the first time by a Welsh Franciscan from Abergavenny, Father Edward Richards, on September 5, 1824; he extended his journeys to *Maesteg* where, he wrote, the Irish were "eminent propagandists of the Faith". Father Richards also took an interest in *Porthcawl*, where a small dock was being built, for he was a native of the vale of Glamorgan. He arranged that Mass should be said there occasionally, generally by the priest from Swansea, but the Catholic requirements of Porthcawl were then only temporary and it did not have a permanent church and pastor till much later (1906-11). The indefatigable friar also ministered sometimes at *Bridgend* (a translation of the Welsh name Penybont), where he was again strongly impressed by the faith of the Irish.

In 1827 Mgr. Collingridge transferred from Poole to Merthyr (what a change!) a young priest from Waterford who had been sent to the Western from the

London district: this was Patrick Portal, who in his eight remaining years worked with unflagging zeal. "This mission," he wrote, "is one of the most severe and disagreeable I have ever heard of. The poor people indeed are extremely good and kind", but many of them had not been into a church for years, and were able to do so little for their pastor that he could not buy a new pair of breeches, much less a horse, without help from the bishop. "Nothing here but hardship when out and solitude at home!" he wrote—and how many devoted priests on the Welsh mission have echoed those words since. Mr. Portal was well liked by the Welsh and they came to hear him preach; as he knew only Irish and English he got a Catholic Welshman, Mr. Lewis, Nant y Glo,* to explain the Faith to them in their own tongue on Sundays in the large room he had hired for Mass at Merthyr. He also hired the club-room of an inn at *Rhymney*, where he said a second Mass every Sunday. After the riots and military violence at Merthyr, increasing material difficulties drove Portal in 1831 to live at Newport, ministering to that place, Cardiff, and Merthyr till his death in 1835.

In the north Mgr. Collingridge established two new permanent missions. In 1827 he sent the Rev. Edmund Carbery to *Bangor* where, and at Caernarfon, he found a number of Catholics, "All with a few exceptions poor tradesmen,† and also travelling dealers from Ireland." Mr. Carbery called, "as a matter of courtesy and also to secure his protection", on the Protestant bishop

* William Lewis was a redoubtable apologist and wrote a book of *Ymddiddanion am Grefydd*, "Conversations about Religion". He was the father of Mgr. Peter Lewis.

† It is not clear if he means artisans or uses the word in the south English sense.

(Dr. H. W. Majendie), who was "a liberal and much liked man . . . He received me very kindly and very sincerely promised every assistance he should have in his power". But in general his reception was hostile, and as there was great difficulty in hiring a room he would celebrate Mass and Vespers* in the house of one or other of his flock, who laughed at the threats of their landlords. It took some years for this mission really to "get going"; it returned 100 Catholics in 1838.

The border town of *Wrexham* was growing with the development of the north Welsh coalfield, and the priest at Chester, John Briggs, afterwards a vicar apostolic and then first bishop of the revived see of Beverley, wrote to Mgr. Collingridge that he was endeavouring to build a chapel in the Welsh town, "where my flock amounts to sixty or seventy . . . all poor, with one exception". Wealthier Catholics in Lancashire were helping, and he asked the bishop for a subscription to help on an "advance into this abandoned county, [which] will I trust diffuse its blessings to the neighbouring towns and villages where there are several Catholics scattered without any pastor to watch over them, or to assist them in their dying moments". In the next year, 1828, the chapel was opened in King Street, the forerunner of the present pro-cathedral of Menevia, and ten years later the congregation numbered 150.

Mgr. Collingridge died in the year of Catholic Emancipation, and was succeeded by his coadjutor Mgr. Peter Augustine Baines, a monk of Ampleforth.

* Notice *and Vespers*. And this in the catacombs, as it were. "Vespers at 3 o'clock on Sundays and holidays" is advertised at Holywell in 1841: Mass and Vespers was as usual then as Mass and "devotions" now.

The stormy career of this prelate is no concern of ours here, except in that it brought to Wales two priests of striking merit, one of whom especially did a pioneer's work in the country. In the course of his efforts to establish a seminary for his vicariate under the care of Benedictines, Mgr. Baines led a small exodus of monks and students from Ampleforth to the property called Prior Park that he had bought near Bath ; among them were Dom Thomas Burgess, the prior, and Dom Edward Placid Metcalfe, the procurator. During the canonical proceedings that followed, these Benedictines were all declared secularized by the Holy See, whereupon Fathers Burgess and Metcalfe severed their connection with Prior Park and asked to be sent on the mission since they could not now continue monastic life.

Father Burgess has already been mentioned in connection with Monmouth (p. 30). Father Metcalfe was first made chaplain to the Mostyns at Talacre. He was an accomplished linguist, and at once began to learn Welsh, which he soon mastered. After about four years there he was sent to Monmouth, and almost immediately transferred to *Newport*, once the peaceful village of Casnewydd but now the important "new port". This was in 1836 after the death of Patrick Portal. Mass had first been offered in modern Newport by Mr. Barnes in a private house in 1809, and early in 1812 the munificence of John Jones, Llanarth, had provided a chapel on the green outside West Gate, but it was not till 1828 that the first resident priest, Mr. Burke, was definitely settled there. Mr. Metcalfe remained there for eight years, working with vigour and success among Welsh, Irish, and English, making use of pen as well as tongue in the preaching of the

gospel, and replacing the chapel by the church of St. Mary in 1840. This was to be the cause of grievous financial trouble to the vicar apostolic some years later, and it was nearly wrecked by militant Chartists in the very year of its opening: intervention by the military was needed to save it. There was a great deal of active Protestant hostility for Metcalfe to overcome, and for a time he had the assistance of the Rev. Charles Kavanagh. Among his writings were adaptations into Welsh of Challoner's *Garden of the Soul* and *Think Well On't*, and *Crynoad o'r Athrawiaeth Cristionogol*, a manual of Christian instruction that ran into many editions. In 1844 Father Metcalfe was moved to Bristol; he died at Leeds three years after, giving his life while tending the victims of an epidemic, and at a moment when it seemed that his long-cherished hope of being readmitted as a monk of St. Benedict was about to be realized.

Another hero at this time was an Irish priest named Carroll, who had done his studies at Saint-Sulpice. He came from Dublin to Wales in 1835, just in time to take up Portal's work in the Merthyr, Dowlais, Rhymney, Tredegar district, and lived in a cottage at *Dowlais*. He had to help support himself by hawking around the town the vegetables which he grew in his garden. "Any one who called upon the zealous Father Carroll at Merthyr must remember how, within the door of the poor workman's cottage which he rented, the entrance was almost blocked up by two or three sacks of meal or potatoes, which he retailed under market price for the benefit of the poor, yet eking out thereby his own maintenance. . . . He died of the Irish fever, in the fatal year 1847, caught in the discharge of his heavy duties. A few days before, he was noticed,

by a Protestant gentleman, making his way on foot over a bleak mountain to a sick call at a distance of several miles, in pelting rain, wearing a tattered coat, and his feet appearing through shoes and stockings. Being unable to get through a second Mass, on Sunday, two days before his decease, he threw himself upon a mattress in his clothes, upon the ground floor, that he might be better able to administer the Sacraments to any who should be brought for the purpose" (from the Vicar Apostolic's pastoral of Lent, 1866).

Emancipation was a welcome encouragement to the toiling clergy of Wales, but they had not the resources either of men or money to take full advantage of it ; at Cardiff, for example, the priest's income for all purposes averaged about 30s. a week, and the bishop could not count on more than £10 a year from Wales : meanwhile the industrial development of the south was in full swing, but one of the difficulties of the early priests can be appreciated from the fact that the railway from Chepstow to Swansea and Milford was not completed till 1850-56, the Rhymney line till 1858, and the Cambrian 1864. In 1838, nine years after Emancipation, Mgr. Baines sent a report to the Propaganda Congregation : in the whole of Wales there were approximately 6250 Catholics, of whom over half were in Monmouthshire ; Newport had 1800, Merthyr 940, Cardiff 900,* Pontypool 600, Swansea 400, but there were still more at *e.g.*, Llanarth than at Wrexham.

* There were two Catholics in Cardiff in the year 1802.

CHAPTER VI

THE WELSH DISTRICT

WHEN Pope Gregory XVI in 1840 redistributed England into eight vicariates, Wales and Herefordshire were separated from the new Western district and formed into one on their own. The vicar apostolic appointed was Dom Thomas Joseph Brown, who had been prior of Downside for six years, and he was consecrated titular bishop of Apollonia. At his consecration Mgr. Wiseman, then coadjutor of the Central district, truly said that "For labour and exertion there will be abundant room, God knows, in the field allotted to your care", and the new bishop himself summed up the position in a sentence: "To dispense the sacraments, the doctrines of truth, and the consolations of the Catholic ministry to many thousands of poor Irish labourers, who are congregating in the mining localities, we have sixteen missions only". The Catholics of Pontypool and Abersychan were still assisting at Mass in a public-house, those of Merthyr in a loft over a slaughter-house, the Rev. Charles Kavanagh reported that the Swansea chapel was collapsing in floor and roof; the Irish at Cardiff had a resident priest, but they were in a bad way, and those at Rhymney and Tredegar in a worse. Mgr. Brown made an appeal in the Catholic press "to save the missioner at Cardiff from being forced to sell before it was fat the pig on which he reckoned for rent

of his humble residence—and some may have heard how the Bishop found him, on a Monday, in bad health, and dependent for the coming week on the collection made the day preceding amongst his congregation ; the amount being two shillings and sixpence ! We had a sovereign to spare which was added.”

During his episcopate of forty years Mgr. Brown changed the face of the earth in South Wales so far as the facilities for Catholic worship and pastoral care of the people were concerned, but the beginning was slow ; there was chronic need of money, for there were hardly a dozen well-off Catholics : they responded nobly but the needs were yet greater ; and there were grave sets-back, notably the sudden influx of starving Irish in 1847. In his second year of office the vicar apostolic gave an account of his vicariate in the *Catholic Directory*. A chapel had been begun at Cardiff (it was finished in 1842) through the generosity of Mrs. Eyre, of Bath, and her son Thomas, but Swansea and Merthyr were in urgent need, and there were only four Catholic “ poor-schools ”, of which two were in the north, one being at Wrexham, and two in Monmouthshire (Abergavenny and Monmouth). He appealed for £100 a year each for the support of two travelling Welsh-speaking missionaries. In the following year (1843) the appeal was repeated : the Association for the Propagation of the Faith had promised to support the two missionaries for a year but now the bishop was specially harassed by affairs at Newport : there was a debt of £2,890 on the church there and the creditors were threatening to sell it up. “ The S. Congregation of Propaganda, also ourselves, had been authorized to entertain confident hopes of assistance, which proved to be delusive ; yet this was not suspected until after

we had accepted an obligation of submitting to episcopal consecration." In response he received only £50 and the endowment for the priest given by the Joneses of Llanarth and Clytha had to be used to pay off accumulated interest. Pontypool, too, was in trouble, for the inn that was used for Mass suddenly ceased to be available. "The pecuniary resources of the diocese were most scanty. . . . Swansea and Brecon in Wales had certain allowances, so also had Chepstow, Monmouth, Abergavenny . . . Llanarth and Courtfield being chaplaincies. But Newport, Merthyr, Cardiff and Usk were dependent totally upon charity and the efforts of their congregations, none of which were then numerous, as some now are" (Lenten pastoral, 1866). Only a very few of the churches had a ciborium for reserving the Blessed Sacrament for the sick. A notable benefactor in those hard days was Miss Anne Higgins.

The *Catholic Directory* for 1842 had announced the formation of a Society of St. David, whose objects were "to raise a suitable and permanent income for the Rt. Rev. Vicar Apostolic of Wales, and to provide him with some means towards relieving the urgent necessities of his destitute Church." It was organized by the Rev. Joseph Rathbone, priest at Newport in the Isle of Wight, together with Mr. Hensler, of Bristol, and Mr. Thomas Barnewell. Among the original patrons were Mgr. Daniel Murray, Archbishop of Dublin, Mgr. James Kyle, Vicar Apostolic of the Northern district of Scotland, and Mgr. Thomas Griffiths, Vicar Apostolic of the London district; the Earl of Fingall was president and there was a number of distinguished lay vice-presidents. Agents were appointed to receive subscriptions in the three kingdoms, and between June and

October £408 had come in. In twelve more months the total was £1,423 and Mgr. Brown refers to the Society with great thankfulness in a Lenten pastoral letter, promising that a Mass should be offered every month for the intentions of the donors. Nevertheless, the *Catholic Directory* for 1844 has to continue to emphasize that "the condition of this extensive vicariate is still such as to present a most urgent claim upon Catholic charity, as must be manifest to every one who reads the foregoing appeals" for various missions.

In his statement in the *Directory* for 1845 Mgr. Brown draws attention to the fact that the greater progress of Catholicism in England than in Wales was due, "in part, to many Welsh priests, who were detained there instead of being sent to their native country; therefore the present state of Wales is not without a claim of justice on English Catholics." This was incontestably true, and a point that has received insufficient attention.

During the period of the first Welsh vicariate Pontypool at last got its chapel (the priest responsible for it, Mr. Woollett, was practically driven from the town by anti-Catholic and anti-Irish physical violence), and so did Dowlais, where the heroic Mr. Carroll sleeps in an unnamed grave beneath the floor of St. Illtyd's. A chapel was also opened at *Nant y Glo* in 1846 and in the following year the Fathers of Charity (Rosminians) took over St. Mary's at Newport, an event that had the happiest consequences for the Catholics of that place and afterwards of Cardiff as well. In the north, Bangor obtained a new church in 1848 and a school in 1849, and at the same time the Jesuits came to St. Beuno's, but their activities there belong to the next period (see pp. 101 and 172).

During this decade there was much fruitful activity in the south-west, where the making of the naval dockyard near Pembroke in 1814 and other public works had brought an increase of population. The great apostle of this district was the Rev. Peter Lewis, who had been appointed missionary apostolic in accordance with Mgr. Brown's scheme. He was the son of William Lewis, Nant y Glo, originally of Carmarthen, and was resident priest at various times at Haverfordwest, Pembroke Dock, Carmarthen, Brecon, and Swansea; he eventually retired in 1875 and was for twenty-five years the beloved chaplain at the convent of our Lady of Charity at Bartestree. He was made a privy chamberlain to Pope Leo XIII in 1898, and died at Cardiff in 1902. Mgr. Lewis was the last native Welsh priest of the "old school"; in him, Lewis Havard, and the like, the Church in Wales had an authentic Welsh element whose loss was irreparable.

Mr. Lewis went to *Milford Haven* (Abercheddyf) in 1844 but removed to *Haverfordwest* (Hwlffordd) in the next year: there were 175 Catholics in the two places. He bought a cottage in Dew Street, and there Mass was celebrated for twenty-six years, till the church of SS. David and Patrick was opened in 1872. In 1867 the priest was a Father Davis, who lodged with a family named Cridle in Bridge Street. Two years later the Bishop of Newport, while recognizing his excellent work, refused to renew his faculties on account of his "being over given to smoking and wearing a singular costume". In his place was appointed the Rev. John Cullen, a kinsman of Cardinal Cullen, who ministered in Haverfordwest for the next twenty years. From 1914 till 1932 the church was served from Milford. Mass was celebrated in various places at Milford till the tem-

porary church of St. Francis was set up in 1903, when there were only a dozen Catholics left ; now there is a permanent church, presbytery, school, and convent. At *Pembroke Dock* (Pater) Mr. Lewis first had to avail himself of " a low and mean public-house ", but he began a church in 1846 which was opened in the following year. At present all three churches have resident priests. The Rev. Oliver Murphy, who came to Pembroke Dock when Mr. Lewis left the district in 1850, remained there for forty-four years.

The year 1847 saw the peak of the famine in Ireland, which meant for Wales the arrival of thousands more Catholics and with them unending difficulties and crushing responsibilities for the vicar apostolic and his few clergy. New Mass-centres were formed, and as the years passed churches and chapels were gradually built and—what was something new for Wales—Catholic schools organized ; but many fell by the wayside in that terrible time, sheep were lost for lack of shepherds. The Welsh of the towns, hardly removed by a generation from the hospitable and kindly folk of the mountain farms and valley villages, were already denatured and demoralized by machine-age industry, by life in the slum, the factory, and the mine ; they had no welcome for these unhappy Irish emigrants : on the contrary, their presence was resented and hated—they were rivals in the struggle for existence, they were foreigners, they were papists. It is not surprising that in a strange country, in an atmosphere of hostility, amid people whose religion expressed itself as an antithesis of their own, in conditions that were a direct incentive to unbelief and ill-living, and often far beyond the reach of priest and sacraments, it is not surprising that many Irish lost the Faith, and their descendants,

more often, alas ! infidel than Protestant, can be met in the coal-valleys to-day. On the clergy, too, the strain was sometimes more than could be sustained, as Mgr. Hedley was to realize poignantly even forty years later.

At the time of the restoration of the hierarchy (1850) the vicariate of Wales had, according to the *Catholic Directory*, 10,000 Catholics (this figure seems an underestimate), distributed as follows : Abergavenny 400, Bangor 250, Brecon 220, Cardiff 1800, Chepstow 150, Coed Anghred ?, Dowlais 1200, Holywell and Talacre 60, Llanarth 170, Milford and Haverfordwest 100, Mold 100, Monmouth 300, Newport 2300, Pembroke Dock and Tenby 150, Pontypool 1000, Swansea 500, Usk 70, Wrexham 300—which does not make a total even of 10,000. There were 25 missionary priests, with 23 established missions having 21 churches and chapels.

It is not to be expected that there should be found in Wales much trace of that religious revival called the Oxford Movement that was then taking place in England. The conversion of Viscount Feilding, heir to the Earl of Denbigh, and his wife is referred to elsewhere (p. 190), as is Father Henry Hughes (p. 114), but mention may be made here of three other notable Welsh converts who were living at this time, two of them named Lloyd and born in the same year.

Howel William Lloyd was born at Rhagatt, Merioneth, in 1816 and was a descendant of Osborn Wyddel. He was at school at Rugby under Arnold, went to Jesus College, Oxford (the Welsh college), of which he was fellow and, having been ordained in the Church of England, was presented in 1842 to the perpetual curacy of Pentrefoelas in Denbighshire. He belonged to the "evangelical school" of Anglicanism, but he had

strong historical interests and became very disturbed in mind by the claims both of Nonconformity and of Catholicism. Accordingly he resigned his benefice in 1844, and two years later was received into the Church at Old Oscott by Mgr. Ullathorne. He wished to become a priest and entered the Oscott seminary, but his health failed and he soon afterwards married. His conversion cost him most of his friends and he suffered much obloquy, so that he welcomed an invitation from Mgr. Capel in 1874 to leave Wales and lecture in the Catholic university college at Kensington. This venture soon failed, but Lloyd lived in London for the rest of his life, engaging himself in Welsh studies: among his works was the translation of a catechism of Christian doctrine into Welsh. On the death of his wife, though he was seventy-one years old, he again tried his vocation, but what he had been not strong enough to do in his youth he was still less able to do now. He died at Kensington in 1893, having read the Divine Office every day during his last five years. A Protestant friend referred to his long life of neglect and misunderstanding as a martyrdom, and it was endured with the cheerfulness befitting a saint.

A friend who was always faithful to H. W. Lloyd, Rhagatt, was that very remarkable character *J. Y. W. Lloyd, Clochfaen*, whose career, however, was markedly different and more eventful. Jacob Youde William Hinde, known all over middle Powys in his day as "Chevalier Lloyd", was born in 1816, the son of J. W. Hinde of Langham Hall, Essex, and Harriet, co-heiress of the Rev. Thomas Youde of Clochfaen in Montgomeryshire and Plas Madog in Denbighshire. Through his mother he claimed descent from Gwrtheyrn (Vortigern) through Madog Danwr, a twelfth-century

lord of Clochfaen, and Tewdwr Trefor. It was after the death of his maternal aunt and his consequent succession to the estates of Clochfaen and Plas Madog that he in 1868 assumed by licence from the Crown the name and arms of Lloyd, Clochfaen.

Mr. Lloyd went to Wadham College, Oxford, and graduated there in 1839, being ordained in the Church of England in the following year, and he was licensed to the curacy of Capel Banhaglog, under Llandinam in Montgomeryshire. He inherited his property in 1857 and was a model landlord, endearing himself far and wide by his generosity and personal charm. His historical studies helped to lead Mr. Lloyd into the Catholic Church, and when Garibaldi invaded the Papal States in the 'sixties he, like other Catholics of many nationalities, joined the pontifical zouaves as a private and served during the campaign. In recognition of his services Pope Pius IX conferred on him a knighthood of St. Gregory and, these being the days before people were shy of using honourable titles, henceforward he called himself and was known as "chevalier" (He was also a knight of the Saviour in the kingdom of Greece). Unhappily he had been disturbed, it seems, by the Vatican Council's definition of papal infallibility and eventually left the Church. At the same time he gave up the use of his papal title, though everybody continued to give it him. It does not appear that Mr. Lloyd again exercised his ministry as an Anglican and indeed his subsequent religious history is confused and uncertain. It is alleged by some that he interested himself in Unitarianism and Spiritism, wavering between one or both of them and a negative "free thought"; others deny this, asserting that "he openly said he was a Deist", while admit-

ting that "the Chevalier's religion got so much mixed . . . that it was very hard to know what he was." He bequeathed land to the parish of Llangurig for a burial-ground, with the proviso that no Anglican minister was to officiate in it or the Book of Common Prayer be used; on the other hand, he regularly attended the parish church there ("until he quarrelled with the clergy, egged on by some of the Methodist deacons") and spent £11,000 on its restoration in 1878.

Certainly Christian doctrine was not Chevalier Lloyd's strong point: he was more at home with history and archæology, and these were in fact his primary interests. He helped Edward Hamer with his history of Llangurig, and was in turn helped by H. W. Lloyd, Rhagatt, in his own *magnum opus*. This was a vast work in six volumes with a title to match, usually quoted for convenience as the *History of Powys Fadog*. It was published in 1881-87 and is a marvellous quarry, or rather gold-mine, for the historian, the antiquary, and the genealogist; it has a special value for Catholics because it contains the history and pedigrees of such families as the Parrys and Graingers of Twysog.

Chevalier Lloyd was reconciled with the Church before his death,* which took place at Ventnor on October 14, 1887, at the age of seventy-six. He was lamented by all who knew him and many who did not, and his geniality, kindness of heart, and benevolence towards his tenantry and people are still remembered. Mr. Lloyd never married and his estates passed to the

* *Ut fertur*. I am aware that this is denied by some, including Mr. J. R. Pryse, Pantdrain, still living, who knew him extremely well. But, lacking direct evidence, the weight of opinion and probability seems to be in favour of reconciliation. The fact that he was buried at Llangurig by the Anglican Vicar of Llanidloes proves nothing either way, for there may have been no Catholic at hand to make other arrangements.

family of Verney, by whom Clochfaen was sold some years ago.

Although he seems early to have lost touch with his native land, mention must be made of *David Lewis* if only because his name is so well known to Catholics as that of the translator of St. Teresa. He was born in 1814, the elder son of Evan Lewis, Llanilar, of the ancient family of the Lewises of Dinas Cerdyn and Blaen Cerdyn in Cardiganshire. He was educated at King's College in London and Jesus, Oxford, where he graduated with second-class honours, and in 1839 was elected fellow of his college and became curate to John Henry Newman at St. Mary's, but he seems never to have been one of the Littlemore circle. In 1843 he accepted a curacy at Roehampton, but he returned to Oxford and in 1845 became vice-principal of Jesus. The very next year he was received into the Catholic Church, whither Newman had preceded him by a few months.

It was at Lewis's lodgings over Fortnum & Mason's in Piccadilly that the first Oratorian to arrive in England, Father Stanton, stayed, and this Welshman was, with the Earl of Arundel and Surrey and Mr. A. Fullerton, mainly instrumental in enabling Newman and Faber to establish the first London Oratory, in King William Street, Strand. Lewis was all his life a devoted friend of the Oratorians ; every year he visited them at Brompton on St. Philip's day and he bequeathed to them the valuable library which had been formed partly with an eye to their needs.

In 1849 David Lewis married the Hon. Jane E. Methuen, and eleven years later they went to live at Arundel, where Lewis led an almost hermit-like life of study. Nevertheless he was never inaccessible, and his

exact scholarship and prudent advice were always at the disposal of enquirers, who were numerous. He worked from ten to eleven hours every day, chiefly in the fields of canon law, ecclesiastical history, and hagiology ; he had considerable reputation as a canonist and was frequently consulted as such. His principal published works are a pamphlet on Jurisdiction, a translation with introduction and notes of Sander's *De schismate Anglicano*, a Life of St. John-of-the-Cross, and those translations of St. Teresa's *Life*, *Book of Foundations*, and *Ascent of Mount Carmel* that have made his name as familiar as his personal history is unknown. That ignorance would have been acceptable to a man whose life was notably hidden, simple, and humble, and became yet more so after his wife's death in 1882.

David Lewis died thirteen years later at Arundel, and was there buried. It shows how cut-off he was from early associations that his friends were surprised when a brother and a nephew arrived for the funeral—they had supposed him to be without relatives.

This brother, Evan Lewis, was also an Oxford man and was one of the few "tractarians" in Wales. While incumbent of Llanllechid he introduced sung Eucharist, which was before unknown in the diocese of Bangor, and he was the first nineteenth-century Anglican in Wales openly to teach the doctrines of the apostolical succession and baptismal regeneration. The controversies that followed, conducted mostly in Welsh, did not prevent him from becoming dean of Bangor, an office which he held from 1884 till his death in 1901.

CHAPTER VII

THE TWO DIOCESES

BY the letter apostolic *Universalis Ecclesiæ* of September 9, 1850, Pope Pius IX restored the ordinary hierarchy to England and Wales, a happy step that was due to the great Benedictine vicar of the Central district, Mgr. W. B. Ullathorne, more than to any other single influence. A metropolitan see was erected at Westminster, with twelve suffragan sees, and Wales was divided laterally: the six northern counties, Anglesey, Caernarfon, Denbigh, Flint, Merioneth, and Montgomery, became part of the diocese of Shrewsbury, the southern counties, Cardigan, Brecknock, Radnor, Monmouth, Glamorgan, Carmarthen, and Pembroke, together with Herefordshire, formed the diocese of Newport & Menevia.* The agitation against "papal aggression" which this act of the Holy See aroused in England had certain echoes in Wales, *e.g.*, at Cardigan. Here the inhabitants petitioned the mayor "to call a general meeting for the purpose of taking into consideration the propriety of an address to the Throne protesting against the late aggression made by the Pope of Rome upon the

* The older name of Saint Davids. It would seem that there was a definite intention to revive this ancient see and not merely to perpetuate its title, for the papal brief of appointment of Mgr. Hedley in 1881 refers to "the episcopal churches of Newport and Menevia canonically united together for ever." As it turned out, "for ever" lasted only till 1895. The only other ancient sees revived were Beverley (later suppressed) and Hexham.

Constitution of this Country and the Supremacy of the Queen in these realms". His Worship duly convened a meeting in the town hall on November 15, 1850, at 12 o'clock noon—what happened thereat this deponent knoweth not, but no doubt there was plenty of very fervid oratory in the ancient British tongue.

NEWPORT AND MENEVIA UNDER MGR. T. J. BROWN

South Wales was left in the capable hands of Mgr. Brown, who was duly translated from his titular to his new residential see. It is related elsewhere how and why a cathedral priory with a chapter of Benedictine canons and a pro-cathedral church for this diocese was erected at Belmont, near Hereford (see p. 175), but Newport was intended ultimately to be the episcopal and curial centre; meanwhile the Bishop lived in a cottage at Bullingham, not far from Belmont, and monks of his order were put at his disposal for missionary purposes. Their noble and fruitful activities in Glamorgan will be referred to in giving an account of the general expansion in the new diocese.

After the Benedictines the religious most active in South Wales were the Capuchins. In May, 1860, the Bishop of Newport appealed to Pantasaph for a priest for Pontypool, where hostility against the Irish was still very strong, and the guardian sent that redoubtable Italian apostle Father Elzear of Recanati. He was greatly troubled by the state of the children, and turned the chapel (dedicated in honour of the British martyr Alban) into a school on weekdays, where they were taught by a devoted woman who volunteered for the work from Oxford. He was soon joined by Father

Honorius, who said Mass in a half-ruined cottage for the Irish miners that Father Elzear had discovered at *Abersychan*, and two years later the generous pence of the people enabled a large chapel-school to be opened there, on which occasion the sermon was preached by Father John Procter, o.p., from Woodchester. Another mission was started at *Blaenafon*, Mass being celebrated above a warehouse until a chapel-school was built in 1868, largely at the charges of another noble woman, a Franciscan tertiary, who taught the children and devoted her spare time to the welfare of the women. In 1864 Mgr. Brown invited the Capuchins to take charge of the *Cwmbran* district, which was quite uncared for ; here Mass was said in a public-house till a chapel-school was provided in 1867, at the opening of which the cathedral prior of Belmont, Dom Roger Bede Vaughan, was the preacher. *Pontymister* (Risca) began to be served in the following year, where with the aid of benefactors in Newport and elsewhere a church was built almost at once. The last place to owe its Catholic church to the Capuchin friars was *Abertillery*, a coal-mining town where they began to say Mass in 1875 ; it had a chapel in the following year but no resident priest till 1908. Father Elzear made a few Welsh converts at most of these centres, especially at the last named ; it was here lived Gwilym Jones, who became a Catholic following a vision of our Lord in the sacred Host—he not knowing at the time at what he was looking. All the above missions are now in charge of the secular clergy, but the dedications of the churches of Abersychan (St. Francis), Blaenafon (the Sacred Heart and St. Felix of Cantalice), Cwmbran (St. Mary of the Angels), and Pontymister (St. Antony and St. Clare) still testify to their Franciscan origins and

the incalculable debt which west Monmouthshire Catholics owe to the Capuchin friars.

Catholicism died hard in Carmarthenshire, and so late as 1700 a priest was indicted at the Carmarthen great sessions for celebrating Mass.* *Carmarthen* (Caer-fyrddin) was one of the places ministered to occasionally by the travelling Jesuit from Bristol and other priests till a large church was provided at the cost of Lady Cross, Abermarlais, and Miss Catherine Richardson on land given by the Herberts of Clytha. This church was opened by Mgr. Brown in 1852. During the time it was being built it was necessary to enlist the help of volunteer watchmen, for otherwise what was built in the day would have been pulled down in the night by the hands of unfriendly Protestants. St. Mary's, Carmarthen, was served for some years by Lewis Havard, junior, and many "who widely differed from his religious views used to listen to his eloquent Welsh sermons". Fathers Havard and Lewis were responsible for some notable converts, a movement that was not entirely spent in after years. The semi-public oratory at Abermarlais Park, *Llangadock*, has been served from Carmarthen ever since 1854.

The mission at *Aberafon* was founded in 1852 and in the same year the Rev. John Dawson began to say Mass in a public-house at *Tredegar*, where a church was built in 1860. In 1853 three more missions were established: *Treforest* was started from the already existing mission of *Newbridge* (which is now served from Oakdale), and

* "Carmarthen to wit. The jurors present that Samuel Davies . . . after 17th Nov., 1699, viz., in April 7 . . . now and formerly a popish priest said mass in the mansion of John Morgan of Llandilofawr and administered the sacrament to a certain Mary Lloyd and Mary Price according to the Roman use against the statute . . ." *etc.* (From a book of precedents of pleading belonging to the late W. Llewelyn Williams, k.c.).

a chapel-school was provided four years later ; *Aberdare*, which did not get its church until Father Dawson built it in 1866-68 ; and Penllwyn (or Penllyn) where the Herberts of Llanarth gave land for a church, which was rebuilt in 1873 and enlarged in 1926. The last-named parish is to-day known as *Pontllanfraith* (" The Bridge at St. Brigid's Church ''), from whence *Hengoed* is now served every Sunday. In 1854 the Fathers of Charity extended their care to St. David's at Cardiff, still the only church there, and from that time the organized development of Catholicism in the city begins ; St. Peter's parish, Roath, was founded in 1861, and among the priests stationed at this new church were Gastaldi, who became archbishop of Turin, and the well-known writer and restorer of St. Etheldreda's, Holborn, William Lockhart. St. Peter's is still served by the Fathers of Charity. A third mission, St. Patrick's, Durham Street, was begun in 1866.

A church and school were at last built in Ewenny Road at Bridgend in 1856, chiefly through the generosity of the convert Captain Illtyd Nicholl and, the mission thus being definitely established, it was confided to the Benedictines, in whose hands it still is. Another mission long struggling for life, Merthyr Tydfil, was handed over to the monks for permanent foundation in 1859. They handed it over to the Calced Carmelites five years later, who served it till 1878 when they were withdrawn from Wales ; thereupon the Benedictines again took it over and administered it with great success until it was given up to the secular clergy in 1930. *Penarth* was begun by the Fathers of Charity in 1860. The Benedictine Dom Athanasius Clarkson established himself at Rhymney in 1861 where, his second successor wrote

in 1867, there was "a building, sometimes called a church and sometimes a chapel, built only a few years ago, and it threatens soon to be a ruin. The walls stream with damp, the windows are broken, the roof bad . . . if it were three times larger than it is, it would not hold all who ought to attend Mass on Sundays." The Benedictines pulled this mission together, and gave it up to the secular clergy in 1885. Mass had been offered regularly at *Brynmaur* since 1857 when in 1863 it was given a large chapel and resident priest, and in the same year a chapel-school was opened at *Llanelly* through the efforts chiefly of Mrs. Arengo Cross ; it was served from Swansea till 1870, and a new church built two years later. The first Mass at *Ebbw Vale*, where there were 750 Catholics in 1866, was celebrated by one of the Capuchin missionaries and was then served from Tredegar until a resident priest could be spared ; in its turn *Ebbw Vale* now provides a Mass every Sunday at *Cwm*. Mass had been said at *Maesteg* occasionally ever since the days of Father Edward Richards, o.s.f., latterly from *Aberafon*, and now, nearly fifty years later, that is in 1872, with 500 Catholics there, a mission was permanently established by the Benedictines from *Bridgend* ; in the same year the Fathers of Charity formed their second parish in *Newport*, *St. Michael's*, *Pillgwenlly*. A priest from *Maesteg* now says Mass every Sunday at *Cymmer*, near *Port Talbot*.

On the retirement of the veteran Father Peter Lewis in 1873 *St. David's* church at *Swansea* was handed over to the Benedictines, who still minister there. The place was faced with a large increase in population and Father Lewis had already begun to lay the foundations of *St. Joseph's* parish, *Greenhill*, with the assistance of

the Ursulines of Jesus who had (and have) a convent there and had obtained the practical interest of the generous Prince Torlonia. This work was continued and completed by the monks, and a resident priest put there in 1875. The present church, built by Dom Wulstan Richards in 1888, passed to the secular clergy in 1932. The monks also ministered in Dowlais from 1873 till 1930. The Fathers of Charity provided a school in the Canton district of Cardiff and Mass was said in a chapel there from 1874. During the episcopate of Mgr. Hedley, namely in 1897, this mission was confided to the Benedictines of Ampleforth, who in 1907 built the present church—easily the best in Cardiff—of St. Mary of the Angels, which they still serve. A beginning was made at *Mountain Ash* (Aber Pennar) from Aberdare in 1877, when Father Hamelin built a chapel-school in Napier Street that was in use for twenty years; a new church was opened in 1899, when the Bishop of Ardagh preached the sermon; this parish has a chapel-of-ease at *Abercwmboi*. *Hirwain* began to be a station for Mass from 1880; it is now served every Sunday from Aberdare.

In his Lenten pastoral letter of 1866 Mgr. Brown, who was then the last surviving bishop of the reorganization of 1840, wrote:

“ . . . in South Wales, where we found only four missions, with four priests who had no other convenience for public worship than wretched hired apartments, or small rooms in cottages, there are now twelve churches or chapels, with nineteen missionaries, several of whom labour at distant stations. In Monmouthshire, of the five missions existing in 1840, three have new churches, opened since the commencement of the Vicariate; six

churches or chapels have been erected in other localities ; and for five priests it has at this time eighteen, some of whom attend remote stations. . . . We possess only two funds for the education of ecclesiastical students ; and it was not until four years since that we dared make an appeal to our heavily-burdened poor missions, for further aid. Therefore, it would have been absolutely impossible to provide clergy for even considerably below the half of our increased and increasing congregations, and we should have had, and should still have, thousands of poor Catholic labourers craving the bread of spiritual life, yet with no one to break it to them, were it not for timely assistance received from religious orders. . . . In the whole of South Wales there was not a single school-room fit for its purpose, nor indeed do we recollect that there existed one poor-school. Now, mainly through the exertions of the Fathers of Charity, Cardiff alone has three, two of which are superintended by Sisters of Providence—Swansea has three, two of which, for boys, girls, and infants, are under the care of Ursulines of Jesus. Dowlais has two well-conducted schools—and there are five at other missions. Efforts are being made to erect a school-house at Carmarthen, on ground provided by Mr. Herbert of Clytha. [There was] a barn for a school at Newport ; and a small room for like purpose over the sacristy at Monmouth : elsewhere none. Now, there are three good school-rooms at Newport, that for boys well taught by a Brother of Charity, one for girls, and another for infants, conducted by Sisters of Providence—a capital school-house at Pontypool, now under Sisters of Mercy, some of whom go three times a day about two miles from Pontypool to superintend day and night classes in the school-chapel at Abersychan—and fourteen others in various missions, not including Monmouth.

The school at Clytha we owe to that family—that at Bridgend to Captain Illtyd Nicholl (a larger and well-arranged school is now being substituted by the Earl of Dunraven). . . . Of dwelling-houses belonging to missions, there was one only in South Wales—in Monmouthshire there were four. . . . We have now twenty-three buildings, either newly-erected or purchased ; the old dwellings at Brecon and Abergavenny are replaced by useful presbyteries ; and elsewhere the clergy occupy decent rented houses, or apartments. To the late Mr. Middleton is due the mission house at Coedanghred ; to the late Mr. Phillips of Longworth the presbytery of this mission ; to the Llanarth family chiefly that of Newport ; to Captain Illtyd Nicholl, in great part, the mission-house at Bridgend, and to Mr. Hutchins that at Rhymney.

. . . Many will wish to know to what extent conversions have taken place amongst the Welsh ? In most, or all of our missions in South Wales some enter the Church from time to time ; but there is not that return we hoped for, from the increase of clergy, and the improvement in our places of divine worship. Not even the substitution for English of Welsh hymns and prayers, through the zeal of the Society of Jesus, at St. Beuno's College, in North Wales, have produced a considerable and lasting effect. Many reasons may be alleged, for which we have not space here. . . .”

In the *Tablet* in March of the following year (1867) there appeared a long letter from Dom A. P. Wilson, giving an account of the south Welsh missions in general and of that of his own charge, Rhymney, in particular.

“ We are in a corner of the kingdom where tourists seldom penetrate, and whence we have little com-

munication with the rest of the world, except through our coal and iron. We are in a truly missionary country : not working old-established missions, but following the tide of immigration and planting new missions in the midst of coal mines and iron works. . . . The population soon becomes so numerous that priest, church, and school must be provided. In the meanwhile, deprived of all sacraments, religious worship, and instruction, they forget their practices of piety, lose interest in their religion, neglect the training of their children, acquire habits of sin and drunkenness, and, in a state of religious and social degradation, they are found by the priest who is sent to start, as best he can, a mission amongst them. What must he do ? His new charges are all labourers ; most have not yet saved sufficient to rid themselves of the rags in which they first begged for work. There are no shopkeepers or respectable tradesmen, for the town is too recent, and his people have had no opportunity of settling themselves. Labourers they came, and labourers they remain. The dwellings are only rows and ranks of blackened cottages, hastily and badly built. There are no public rooms. Where must the poor priest find room to gather his people together, and dispense to them the mysteries of their faith ? There is only the club-room, attached to some public-house, available, and there, for want of a better place, the missionary must set up his portable altar, and make such a place the weekly tabernacle of the King of kings. This has been, within the last ten years, the beginning of many of the missions on the Welsh mountains. . . . Our churches, or chapels, or barns, are, of course, infinitely better than a room attached to a public-house ; but . . . the fact is, in more than one instance, the poor missionary in his anxiety to get away from the club-room, began to build hastily,

without direction, and without architect ; and misled by some scamping tradesman, acting as his own superintendent, plunged into stones and mortar, got up four walls, with some windows in them and a roof on them ; and that was all he could do. So that we have got some wretched buildings, put up by one generation to be repaired by the next ; put up in a great hurry, and having one part or another ready to fall in pieces, before they have stood ten years. . . .

. . . Our congregations, from first to last, are labourers whose wages average from 12s. to 18s. per week. Moreover, we are in a wilderness—a wide barrenness—contending with a severe, inhospitable climate, where neither animal nor vegetable life can thrive. . . . We are far too poor to get up lotteries or bazaars ; and the priest, being alone, cannot leave home to go a-begging. Provisions being dear, wages small, and paid only at long intervals (at Rhymney the usual interval is nine weeks !) the people scarcely ever have ready money.

. . . If your readers read the ' Annals of the Propagation of the Faith ', and note with admiration and edification the tales of missionary hardships and pinching poverty of apostolic men, they can find the counterpart and a good illustration in many of the missions amongst the Welsh mountains. They would not meet with cruel Mandarins, nor witness any bloody executions (except when Welshmen belabour and kick a poor Irishman to death) ; but they would find most of the other hardships. . . . My predecessor in this mission, in the course of three years, was twice near to the gates of Heaven. His predecessor, again, after a year's good work, was struck down in the vigour of manhood, a martyr to the unhealthy site of the mission residence. His monument stands in front of the presbytery as a memorial of an inhospitable

climate, and as a warning to myself of the risks I must run in a very bleak, exposed situation, and in a house through which wind, snow, and water threatened to have an indisputable and long established thoroughfare. . . .”

By the time Mgr. Brown reached his seventy-fifth year his labours were telling on him very seriously, and in 1873 he was given an auxiliary in the person of Dom John Cuthbert Hedley, a canon of the diocesan chapter, who was consecrated titular bishop of Caesaropolis. He took up his residence in Hereford and during the ensuing years more and more of the routine duties of the ordinary fell to him, though never so much as his enthusiasm and energy were prepared to undertake.

Mgr. Brown died in 1880, and Mgr. Hedley preached at the funeral of this “truly righteous, single-minded, fearless and guileless man”. “He had a complete incapacity for idleness and almost for rest. . . . For forty years he travelled, preached, wrote, saved, and begged for his flock. . . . All his actions had energy, intensity, and dash. He was like some patriarch, homeless and wandering in search of a land of promise ; some crusader, with no ties to bind him to earth but with the infidel before him and the holy Sepulchre in his view ; some missionary in a heathen land, who knows he has to die but who before he dies would add to the number of the saved.” When Mgr. Brown took over the Welsh vicariate there were sixteen chapels and stations and some dozen and a half of priests in the whole of Wales ; when his episcopate came to an end—on a spring afternoon, at “the hour when Jesus bowed his head and died for the souls of men, at the hour when the bishop had been in the habit of assembling his little household around him day by day to pray

for the souls of the dying"—at that moment there were over forty churches and missions and nearly as many priests in southern Wales alone.

SHREWSBURY UNDER MGR. JAMES BROWN

When at the re-establishment of the hierarchy the north Welsh counties were made part of the diocese of Shrewsbury they came under the rule of a bishop chosen from the secular clergy, who also was named Brown, James at baptism. He was a Wolverhampton man and was president of the college at Sedgley Park (now Cotton) at the time of his promotion to the episcopate. His rule extended over the same period, almost to a year, as that of Mgr. T. J. Brown but progress in North Wales was of course on nothing like the scale of the south: industrial development took place only in the quarries and in the mines of the north-east corner, and the coastal resorts were still in their infancy. The most important events were the coming of the Capuchins to Pantasaph in 1852 (see p. 189) and the missionary work of the Jesuits from St. Beuno's.

The Capuchins, who were much valued by the Bishop and received the greatest kindness and encouragement from him during their difficult early days at Pantasaph, established their first mission in 1853, at *Flint*. It was begun by Father Antony, but was "made" by his second successor Father Lawrence, who died during the cholera epidemic of 1863. The secular clergy then took charge of Flint and the present church of St. Mary was built in 1885. The second priest at Flint, Father Elzear, began the mission at *Mold* (in Welsh *Yr Wyddgrug*). From the latter part

of the eighteenth century until 1842 Mass had been said in the neighbouring mansion of the Misses Giffard, then at a farm, and then occasionally by a priest from Wrexham at the house of a Welsh convert ; in 1850 it was considered " unsafe " for a priest to be there. Now on Sundays Father Elzear would walk the twelve miles from Pantasaph to Flint and say Mass there in a hired room, then another eight miles to Mold for a second Mass. His health could not stand this strain, and it was taken up by Father Lawrence, who eventually built a church in honour of St. David in Ffordd Fain at Mold, which too is now served by a secular priest.

When Father Elzear gave up Flint and Mold he turned his attention to the port of *Holyhead* (Caergybi) in Anglesey, where Mgr. Collingridge had in vain tried to provide for the Irish residents about the year 1812. The friar was more successful. His first difficulty was to find money for the journey to and fro. At last Father Elzear interviewed the railway company and pointed out that if there was Mass at Holyhead people would use the railway to get there from outlying districts. He got his free pass ! Moreover the Company let him have a room at the Pelham Hotel to celebrate Mass in. By 1860 he had built the church of our Lady in Market Street ; it is now in charge of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, who have a Catholic population of 450. The mission of *Saltney*, which is only just over the Welsh border from Cheshire, was begun in 1862 by a Capuchin from Chester, who celebrated Mass in the loft of a stable ; later on a school was built to be used as a chapel as well. In 1913 the mission was handed over to the secular clergy and in the following year the present church of St. Antony of Padua was opened.

Meanwhile, the fathers of the Society of Jesus had

been establishing missions, also mostly for the benefit of Irish immigrants, from St. Beuno's. The first of these was *Denbigh* (Dinbych) in 1853. This place had been already in need of a priest twenty-five years earlier, and the Rev. John Briggs had written from Chester to Mgr. Collingridge recommending that a Mr. Harrison be sent there as there was a layman of substance, Mr. Charles Sankey, willing to give all the support he could (he married Mary Anne, the last of the Catholic Parrys of Twysog, who died in 1881). Nothing, however, was done in consequence, though Mass was occasionally said in Mr. Sankey's house (now part of the grammar school). The Jesuit mission prospered, its centre being at Twysog, till in 1863 Father Everard Arundell (afterwards Lord Arundell of Wardour) built a chapel-school on Castle Hill, the land being given by Mrs. Ainsworth. *Rhyl* was also founded in 1853, by Father James Etheridge, and a church and presbytery built by Father J. A. Wynne ten years later. *Saint Asaph* was founded in 1854, a church-school being built on land bought from Mr. Jones, the Toy-Shop; the first Mass had been said four years earlier in the house of Colonel Nicholas Blundell ("The Mount"). A mission was established at *Ruthin*, which the Jesuit fathers served till 1872, and in 1875 it was closed for some years; from here several more remote places were occasionally served. The fathers of the Society continued to direct these missions for over seventy years, till 1930-33 when they were given up to the secular clergy of the diocese.

At Wrexham the chapel in King Street was in 1857 replaced by the church of our Lady of Sorrows in Regent Street, of which Canon Browne, of the Shrewsbury chapter, became the first missionary rector. The

church is a " gothic revival " building with a commanding steeple, designed by the younger Pugin, and was formally consecrated in 1907; the founder and chief donor was a convert, Mr. Richard Thompson, Stansty, who died at Chorley in 1866. It is now the pro-cathedral of the diocese of Menevia.

At *Caernarfon* Mass was first celebrated in recent times by Mr. Carbery from Bangor in 1827. Its first resident priest was Francis Lansard, who came to the neighbourhood as a teacher of music and languages in 1866. He opened a room of his house in Crown Street as a chapel; this was attacked by a no-popery mob, from whose hands it was saved by a convert, Mrs. Rosa Wilberforce, who was a Welshwoman and could deal with the rioters in their own tongue. Mr. Lansard later moved his chapel to a house on Twthill. His second successor was Ioan Huw Jones of Bala, who had charge of the mission for thirty-six years (1872-1908). It was he who built the present church of St. Helen in Eleanor Street in 1886.*

At the same time that the Jesuits were coping with the development of the north coast watering-places at Rhyl a secular priest named Jenkins was doing the same at *Llandudno*. In the early 'sixties Mass was said in a cottage, till in 1868 the old Turkish baths were adapted for a chapel and presbytery. This arrangement lasted for twenty-five years, when the imposing church of our Lady Star of the Sea was built. It was opened in 1893 by Cardinal Vaughan, in the presence of

* No doubt this church is esteemed to be, and probably is, dedicated in honour of the St. Helen who was mother of Constantine the Great. But she had nothing to do with Wales. The Welsh St. Helen is Elen Luyddog, " of the Hosts ", the Manx wife of the Emperor Magnus Maximus and mother of his son Constantine (Custennin ap Macsen Wledig); they were associated with *Caer Saint* (Segontium), near *Caernarfon*.

Sir Stuart Knill, Bt., Lord Mayor of London. On the other side of the northern peninsula, on Cardigan Bay, a chapel was provided at *Pwllheli* in 1879 by Mrs. Anne Richardson, Brynhyfryd, and it was given a resident priest the next year who, however, transferred himself further east to Tremadoc in 1893, and there the centre of the mission remained for some years.

Catholicism was conserved for a time around *Welshpool* (Pwll, Trallwng) by the Herberts of Powis castle (Castell Coch ym Mhowys), which was in the care of the Holywell Jesuits, where, too, Mgr. Robert Pugh, protonotary apostolic, lived after the Restoration till he died in jail at Newgate in 1679. The Jesuits had a chapel and school at Welshpool, which was attacked by an Orange mob at the Revolution, but it seems to have hung on for a year or two longer. Two of those concerned with the Countess of Nithsdale (Lady Winifred Herbert) in the famous rescue of her husband from the Tower of London after the 'Fifteen were local Catholic Welsh girls: Grace Evans and the lovely and accomplished Gwen, daughter of Jenkin Morgan, the Powis park-warden.*

William Herbert, the second Marquess of Powys, became a Jesuit on the death of his wife in 1723-4, and the last chaplain left the castle when the third Marquess died in 1748 and the title became extinct, the estates passing to the Herberts of Chirbury. At the end of the eighteenth century there was a Benedictine missionary, Dom Bernard Young, who had had his headquarters at Welshpool (1784-1801). There was

* Jenkin and his wife and sister were recusants. It is curious that Gwen should have become governess to the children of the Whig Duke of Dorset, under the assumed name of "Mrs. Hilton". The great wood and adjoining pool in Powis castle park are still known as "Gwen Morgan's".

another Benedictine at Buttington Hall, near Welshpool, after the 'Forty-five. He was a Scot, Robert Hall Leith, who had been confessor to Prince Charles Edward Stuart and was wounded at Culloden. He left Wales to become abbot of St. James's at Ratisbon.

In 1837 Mass was said in the house of an Italian gentleman in Raven Street by Mr. Eugene Egan from Shrewsbury; the local flannel trade was then at its height. Later on the Pack Horse inn in Mount Street was used, and then a Mrs. Sandys offered a room in her house next door to the Grapes. Finally a chapel-school was opened and a resident priest provided in 1866. From Welshpool is served *Newtown* (a translation of the Welsh name, Tref Newydd), where there has been a semi-public oratory at Newtown Hall since 1902.

At Newtown, curiously enough, began the chequered history of the *Aberystwyth* mission. In 1846 two Breton priests, Abbé Joseph Malé and Abbé Micheal Dreau, tried to establish a mission at Newtown but without success, so they transferred their attentions to Aberystwyth, where land for a church had been offered by a Protestant benefactor*. They had no better fortune there, and the attempt was given up in 1848. For ten years after 1858 Mass was offered occasionally and in "the season" by a priest from Brecon or Carmarthen, Mgr. Brown of Newport† writing of the place in 1867, "If it be supported by Catholic visitors, a mission will be established before long, we hope." The hope was vain, but for some years

* An illuminating essay could be written on what the Church in Great Britain owes, both temporally and spiritually, to generous Protestants.

† Aberystwyth was actually in his diocese but it is more convenient to speak of it here with North Wales.

from 1869 a retired Benedictine bishop, Mgr. W. B. A. Collins, formerly vicar apostolic of the Mauritius, lived in the town and supported a priest there. In 1873 the Rev. W. E. Williams from Carmarthen was appointed to this office, and during his incumbency the present church of our Lady of the Angels and St. Winefride and its presbytery in Queen's Road were built. During the rectorship of Mgr. P. E. Hook from 1921 till 1928 the prestige of Catholicism in Aberystwyth (which is a university town as well as a holiday resort) was very considerably heightened, and a memorial pulpit in the church commemorates this keen Welsh scholar and untiring missionary.

In 1876 Mgr. James Brown celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of his episcopate, which was the occasion of the poem called "The Silver Jubilee" by Father Gerard Manley Hopkins, who was then at St. Beuno's College :

Then for her whose velvet vales
Should have pealed with welcome, Wales,
Let the chime of a rhyme
Utter Silver Jubilee.

CHAPTER VIII

THE TWO DIOCESES (*continued*)

NEWPORT & MENEVIA UNDER MGR. HEDLEY

IT was not till nearly a year after the death of Mgr. T. J. Brown that the Holy See issued a brief appointing John Cuthbert Hedley (indubitably one of the three names submitted by the chapter) to succeed him in the see. Mgr. Hedley, a Northumbrian by birth and blood, was only forty-four years old, and his record first as a monk at Belmont and then as bishop auxiliary to Mgr. Brown seemed clearly to mark him as the most suitable person for the vacant office, as indeed proved to be the case: he is one of the half-dozen outstanding figures among the English bishops of the past hundred years, as a prelate, as a writer and preacher, and as a personality. He was enthroned at Belmont on St. David's day, 1881.

The new bishop's first act was the very significant one of transferring his residence from Bullingham—but not to Newport: to Cardiff.* He had long foreseen that that city would become the real hub and capital of South Wales, and moreover, "It seems an awful thing," he wrote, "to be the only true bishop in a population of one million and forty thousand souls, of whom only forty thousand [to that figure had the

* He lived first in St. Andrew's Crescent. Later on the Marquess of Bute gave him a house in the suburb of Llanishen, which was the episcopal residence of the diocese till 1916.

Catholic population sprung in forty years] acknowledge you ; and to be answerable for all of them. To be more in the middle of them I have come to live here." Though such striking things had been done under the rule of his predecessor the state of the diocese was anything but satisfactory : a second generation of immigrant Catholics had grown up upon whom the corrupting influence of industrial city life had had its effect : " the steady pressure of a sinful atmosphere, so different from the steady country life from which so many of our people had come." There was still a great lack of clergy, and of what there was, less than a score were secular priests. Mgr. Hedley, himself a Benedictine and using the monks of his order to the utmost, knew that parochial work is not the normal business of the regular clergy ;* he knew also that carefully selected and trained men were needed for those lonely and poverty-stricken missions in the coal valleys, where too often he had seen the collapse of priests under the burden of that difficult life. He established St. Joseph's High School at Cardiff as a diocesan college where aspirants could make their preliminary studies ; in the early 'nineties J. A. Story was headmaster, with J. Hobson Matthews teaching Welsh, and Canon Exton and Mgr. Hook were successive prefects there in their young days. Most candidates for the priesthood were sent to seminaries abroad, and when they were ordained the Bishop put them as curates in certain selected missions to gain experience and confidence ; it was to provide a train-

* Nevertheless, he had no scruples about the employment of monks on the mission as an emergency measure. " I know of many missions in England and Wales," he said, " where the priest, be he religious or be he secular, is living in a poverty and self-denial which need raise no scruples in the strictest Franciscan or Trappist."



DOM J. CUTHBERT HEDLEY, O.S.B., D.D.
Second and Last Bishop of Newport, 1881-1915.

ing-ground of this sort that the Fathers of Charity handed over the church of St. David at Cardiff which they had served since 1854.

Mgr. Hedley was keenly aware that the progress of Catholicism in South Wales, here and now and indefinitely for the future, was an almost exclusively Irish problem, and as a practical man he tackled it as such. In the words of his biographer Dom J. Anselm Wilson, "the apostolate of the Welsh, through no fault of the Bishop, was a somewhat barren effort"; *very* would be nearer the mark than "somewhat". He was keenly interested in and sympathetic towards Wales and the Welsh, well read in their history, but it is permissible to think that he was not very understanding in their regard, and also too prone to estimate Wales by Glamorgan—a common enough pitfall. The fact that he actively supported Cardiff's claim to be the "capital of the principality" was alone sufficient to alienate a very large body of Welshmen (not confined to the north) and to brand him as "English-minded", the representative of an "alien church". In Cardiff itself he became a leading and popular citizen, and it was certainly a recommendation for him in the eyes of the Welsh, who have so passionate an enthusiasm for formal education, that he was in 1882 elected to the committee for the establishment of a university college in Cardiff; in 1891 he read a paper at the British Association meeting there on the "Science of God"; he was invited and agreed to pronounce a prayer of benediction at the opening of the new Bute dock; he frequently lectured on literary and other subjects in the city, and was a contributor to the *Western Mail* on topics of the day.

His musical enthusiasm led him to the annual

national *eisteddfodau*, and his interest in the Welsh saints, to whose shrines he went on pilgrimage, was genuine, if rather uncritical. He exerted himself to get some of them admitted to the diocesan kalendar, and he was busy writing the second nocturn lessons for Matins of their feasts almost up till the day of his death. In 1889 he encouraged the formation of the St. Teilo's Society for printing Catholic literature in Welsh. It produced a number of useful books and pamphlets, of which one of the best was a Welsh-Latin prayer-book,* admirably compiled by Father Ioan Huw Jones, priest at Caernarfon, who also made Welsh versions of the Sunday epistles and gospels (C.T.S.) and of the "Penny Catechism" (Caernarfon, 1907).

Between 1881 and 1895 about a dozen missions were initiated or given churches and resident clergy. In Cardiff itself the mission of St. Paul's in Tyndall Street, where the Rev. R. J. Butler was so greatly revered, was definitely established and exchanged its chapel-school for a church. At *Caerleon* Mass was celebrated in the parish church so late as the time of James I, and there were still Catholics there in the middle of the eighteenth century, when it was served from Llanarth, and at the beginning of the nineteenth when it was taken over by Usk. It was given a permanent church in 1885 through the munificence of Dr. Charles Woollett; it was dedicated in honour of SS. Julius, Aaron, and David, and is now served from Newport.

* *Llyfr Gweddî*, Caerdydd, 1899. The preface is dated from *Eglwys Elen, Dydd Gwyl Gwen*, "St. Helen's church, St. Gwen's feast-day". In Welsh the word *sant*, "saint", is not and never has been used with saints' names in titles (except in certain personal instances, *Dewi Sant*, David, *Cynnwyll Sant*, *Ffraid Santes*, Brigid), and the contrary usage by Welsh Catholics is to be deprecated. On the title-page of the same book the publishers wrongly call themselves *Cymdeithas Sant Teilo*; it should be *Cymdeithas Deilo*.

Ton y Pandy was made a separate mission in the following year and in 1888 *Neath*, where Mass was first celebrated again soon after 1850, being served from Swansea and Aberafon, was given priest and church of its own in 1888-90.*

So early as the 'forties the needs of the watering-place and fishing-port of *Tenby* (*Dinbych y Pysgod*) had been a matter of concern to Father Peter Lewis, and he occasionally went to say Mass there from Haverfordwest; later it was served from time to time and then regularly from Pembroke Dock, the usual meeting-place being the Tudor coffee-house. In 1888 a local lady approached the provincial superior of the Passionists with the idea of getting a resident priest, and he, with the strong approval of Mgr. Hedley, sent Father Dominic o'Neill, who took Sparta House and celebrated Mass there for the first time on Whitsunday. But this chapel in a house was far too small, and so a loft was rented over the stables of the Coburg hotel, which was transformed by Brother Mark, c.p., and solemnly opened as the public chapel of St. Bride by Mgr. Hedley on October 4 in the same year.

In 1889 the Passionists accepted the charge of the Carmarthen mission, and three priests were stationed at either place. The Passionist chapter then decided that Carmarthen should be their headquarters in Wales and Tenby served therefrom, a decision that did not commend itself to the Tenby Catholics; but though they appealed to the provincial against it the resident clergy were all eventually withdrawn, and a priest sent there only at week-ends. Meanwhile, Sparta House was given up as a lodging in favour of a cottage

* The first hint of the industrial possibilities of South Wales came from Neath: copper was smelted there in 1584.

in Upper Park Road which was most generously offered free from rent and rates by a non-Catholic lady, Miss Mary Statham. Soon after the Passionists, at their own request, handed the Tenby mission to the secular clergy, the Rev. G. V. Bull taking it over in the spring of 1891. The Passionists had bought for the mission an excellent site for a church opposite the gate in the town wall called the Five Arches, and in 1893 the present presbytery and church of the Holy Rood and St. Teilo were solemnly opened by Cardinal Vaughan.

When the Passionists assumed the care of Carmarthen they renovated and restored the church of St. Mary in Union Street from top to bottom, and replaced the old presbytery by a residence—a “retreat”, as their houses are styled—with accommodation for eight religious, which was completed in 1900. They welcomed the Breton Sisters of the Holy Ghost to the town in 1903, and provided entirely new schools for 100 children after the war. Their present Catholic flock numbers about 450, but when they began the Carmarthen mission covered a vast area: all Carmarthenshire and Radnorshire, with parts of Brecknock, Pembrokeshire, and Cardiganshire. Many independent parishes have now been carved out of that, including Tenby, Ammanford, Burry Port, and Llandrindod, and, though their parish is still very large, they are now responsible for serving only one chapel-of-ease, at Llangadock.

Other missions firmly established during this period were *Barry Dock*, *Treorchy*, and *Bassaleg* (Maesaleg), the last of which is still a chapel-of-ease served from Pontymister. At Merthyr a large new church was opened by the Benedictine Dom Stephen Wade in 1894, towards the cost of which £6000 had been raised

in ten years; the ground had been bought by the Carmelites thirty years earlier during their charge of the mission. The Benedictines at St. David's, Swansea, having opened a school in the Dan y Graig district, Mass was celebrated in its chapel from 1892. It was given a resident priest in 1913, and St. Illtyd's church was opened in 1927. It is ministered by a monk of Douai.

SHREWSBURY UNDER MGR. KNIGHT

Mgr. James Brown, during whose episcopate there had been great development in the English part of Shrewsbury diocese, died in 1881, eighteen months after his namesake in the south. He was succeeded by his auxiliary, Mgr. Edmund Knight, who was enthroned in his cathedral in the spring of 1882.

The same year saw the re-opening of the mission at Ruthin, which had been closed since 1875. This was due to the enterprise of the French Jesuits of St. David's College at Mold, who undertook to serve the place; a chapel had already been provided there by the St. Beuno's Jesuits, who later took charge of it again. At the present time the parish has a resident secular priest. The mission at *Buckley* in Flintshire was also begun by the St. David's Jesuits, who built a church there in 1893. When they left Wales two or three years later its ministry was taken over by the chaplain of the Sisters of Charity of Caen, who had bought the college buildings at Mold from the Jesuits. Buckley had its first resident priest in 1908. *Colwyn Bay* was first served by the Capuchins from Pantasaph, who in 1895 began to say Mass on Sundays in a hotel for the benefit of the increasing number of summer visitors. Later a benefactor provided the money for

a church and presbytery there, on condition that they should be occupied by Oblates of Mary Immaculate, who in 1895 had taken over the church at Holyhead. The Capuchins accordingly withdrew, the church of St. Joseph was built, and is still ministered by the Oblate fathers.

It was during this period that the remarkable and attractive figure of Father Henry Hughes, a secular priest and tertiary of the Order of Preachers, flashed across the horizon of North Wales, only to be swallowed up in an untimely grave. He was born at Caernarfon in 1833, the son of an Anglican minister, and was baptized Henry Bailey, to which names he subsequently added that of Mary; the Hugheses were an old Welsh family of the county, and his mother was an Irish-woman. His father died while Henry was still young, and with his brothers he was brought up under the guardianship of a minister and a deacon of the Calvinistic Methodists. His guardians, nevertheless, permitted him to go to an Anglican training college, where he came under "high church" influence, and in 1850 he was received into the Catholic Church.

Having a vocation to the priesthood he was sent to the English College at Lisbon, where in due course he was ordained and entered on a brilliant career as professor and preacher in Spain, Portugal, Belgium, and Italy. His wide experience and command of languages—he spoke twelve—made him prominent among the lesser figures of the Vatican Council, and his missionary zeal caused him to be sent as prefect apostolic of a mission to the Abandu in Africa. He was about to be promoted to the episcopate when his health failed, and he was appointed to the charge of the Portuguese community in Boston, U.S.A. Here

he found ample outlet for his apostolic energy ; he worked among the Red Indians and founded convents of the Third Order Regular of St. Dominic in Canada and South America.

But the heart of Father Hughes had always been in his native land, and when in April 1885 he received from Mgr. Knight an invitation to work in North Wales he accepted with alacrity. Father Hughes was a true Dominican in spirit and from the outset he intended that his active labours should be grounded in the contemplative life, buttressed and braced by regular monastic observance. So he set about acquiring a site for a monastery, and by the generosity of two benefactors he was soon enabled to acquire the little island of St. Tudwal, off the south coast of Lleyln in Caernarfonshire. It was a fertile spot, but uninhabited, a mile from the mainland and two miles from Abersoch, the nearest village ; it has fragmentary remains of a church, originally founded by St. Tudwal, a British bishop of Tréguier, in the sixth century. Father Hughes was duly commissioned in the following terms :

“ Edmund, by the grace of God and favour of the Apostolic See, Bishop of Shrewsbury. The Rev. Father Henry Bailey Mary Hughes, t.o.d., missionary apostolic, has my sanction and approval for his work of restoring the monastery on St. Tudwal’s Island, for the Third Order of St. Dominic, and making it a centre for missions to the Welsh of North Wales ; and I pray God to bless all who may aid him in any way towards the furtherance of his holy work. Birkenhead, 18 November, 1886.

✠ EDMUND,
Bishop of Shrewsbury.”

Shortly before, Father Hughes had written to a friend :

“ I should be very glad if, when you go to Brittany, you could bring me one or two Breton youths from Finistère who know Brezoneg thoroughly, as I could easily teach them Welsh ; let them be advanced enough to go into philosophy at least. One or another of the Breton bishops would, I dare say, let you try for volunteers among the students of his seminary. Brittany is the most thoroughly Catholic part of France. . . . Breton students would have the advantage of being thoroughly and most devoutly Catholic ; and as for their language, I can understand most of it myself to read ; when I was at Rome in '69 and '70, I saw and spoke with some Bretons who were there as Zouaves, and we had not much difficulty in getting along when we got used to one another.”

Father Hughes with his companions, two secular tertiaries and a boy, intended to start living on the island at once. But winter was at hand and the landing so bad that they took two cottages at Abersoch until a small quay should be built. In the meantime, definite missionary work was begun, and Mass was said at Abersoch for the first time since the Reformation on Rosary Sunday 1886. Early in 1887 Father Hughes wrote :

“ There is an old dry-stone building on the island, built out of the ruins of the old monastery, which we shall have to roof over and render habitable. This we shall afterwards use as a chapel, and a smaller building at the back for a sacristy. The ruins are but a few ends and corners of walls at present ; but, when we shall have dug up the ground and unearthed the ancient pavement, we shall be able to trace out the

whole plan of the building and restore it to its former use. I preach to the people on Sunday afternoon, and read prayers in Welsh. There is a wonderful movement in our favour just now. The Methodists tried to raise the country against me on my arrival ; but their principal agent here is a stranger in Llein, so he found himself unable to cope with the natural clanishness of the people, who said, ' Father Hughes is no stranger in this country ; he is here by good right, since he speaks Welsh and is our own blood relation.' In fact, I do find myself related by blood or through marriage to all the families round here ; and they claimed kith, kin and alliance with me themselves, before I had been among them twenty-four hours, when they heard I was of the blood of the Rev. John Hughes, Bottwnog. Of course, the relationships would puzzle an English herald to trace out ; but we Welsh folk are very warm to our kindred, and love to trace pedigrees and family ties, counting everything near within the seven degrees of cousinship. I have found cousins innumerable between this and Bangor, and running over into Anglesey and Merioneth—or as we should say, *Arfon a Meirion a Môn*. So, you see, all seems working together for a good mission."

He preached in Welsh every Sunday at Abersoch, and once or twice a week at the nearest town, Pwllheli, where there was already a mission. Here he was enthusiastically received, but at Abersoch he had tiny congregations and bitter opposition. Nevertheless, by June, 1887, he had received six converts, two of whom were death-bed conversions, and he wrote, " the boys are beginning to congregate round me to hear old Welsh stories round the fire, and many of them stay for night prayers."

He found that the local Welsh had no prejudice

against the idea of monasticism as such, and indeed rather liked the prospect of a revived monastery on the island; but active popery in their very midst was another matter, and an outbreak of resentment made the pioneers take up quarters on St. Tudwal's in May, 1887, before their home was ready.

The community had now been reinforced by an Irish priest named Gilfillen, two well-educated converts from Anglicanism, a Scots carpenter, and a Welsh labourer. They set to work to till the land, living meanwhile in corrugated iron huts and tents fortified with turf, and during the summer Father Hughes carried on his missionary work.

"The whole religion of this country," he wrote, "seems to consist in the tonic *sol-fa*; so I must even go with the tide and set them singing Christian doctrine, as I did with the Abandu in Africa, and so fight Methodism with its own weapons. I believe we shall convert Wales better by singing than by preaching."

Difficulties of all sorts beset the little community: insufficient food and fuel, lack of money, trouble with boats. On September 9, Father Hughes wrote:

"On our return to the island we had a misfortune. Our boat the 'Dove', had slipped her moorings during the night so far as to get badly staved against the rocks, and on Sunday, the 18th, we had hard work to get her above water and alongside the wharf for repairs. To-day the tackles by which she was slung gave way, letting her fall bow-on to a rock, so that she stove in her whole bow and is, I fear, a total wreck. So here we are, real missionary Crusoes, on an island two miles from the nearest land on the mainland, and dependent on the charity of those on shore for our communication. Fortunately we had just laid in our

winter stores of biscuits, rice, coffee, pease, oatmeal, etc., so that we shall not starve. Our gardens yield well, but our net cannot be used without the boat. What are we going to do I don't know just yet ; but Saint Joseph will probably get us another boat before long, and all will be right. Meantime my lads are rigging a derrick, and trying to hoist the wrecked boat on to the wharf, to see if it will be possible to repair her. Money is scarce—we have 3½d. on the island, but even that cannot be spent here, as there is no shop. . . . My carpenter has one hand bound up in a poultice ; but one of our young postulants is heaving and hauling, and doing his best to help. We have the turf chapel roofed and floored, and probably should have had it ready for next Sunday were it not for the accident to our boat."

Six weeks later :

" I went ashore yesterday to preach at Mynytho (corruption of *Mynydd y mân nythod*, ' the mountain of little nests '), where I had to go and visit my sick convert, old David Hughes. One of his sons is coming to the island to be instructed and baptized. There is another small village close by, called Y Wyls, where the people have expressed a desire to hear me, and whither I am going, please God, next Sunday; and another young man has applied for instruction, and expressed his wish to come and learn with us on the island, that he also may become a missionary for Wales. He is pure Welsh, from this neighbourhood. I shall soon begin preaching in all the villages round about Abersoch ; there seems to be a good movement afoot among the people, who show every day greater willingness to hear Catholic doctrine. My being Welsh and related to them closely by the ties of blood probably has much to do with it. I have got

into my new hut and am housed for the winter ; the rest were housed more than a month ago. Our first experience of a storm in the new hut was rather amusing. Last night week A. and I were waked up by a furious blast of wind bursting in the window, and beginning to blow the iron plates off from over our heads. He jumped out of bed and rushed out in scanty costume to secure the roof with turf and stones, and fix the shutter in its place by means of my staff and a billhook. The next night it rained heavily, and the water began to find out the joints of our armour till we were well flooded, and had to get up and move the bed into another part of the hut, after jumping bare-foot into as pretty a pool of water as anyone might wish to see. However, the next day we mended it all right, made the roof water-tight, and cut a drain under the cell. *Forsan et haec olim meminisse iuvabit.* We have many a hearty laugh over our pioneer difficulties ; by and by, when all are over, we shall be able to laugh more. We are rather a merry lot on the island, not much given to grumbling, God be thanked ! and these little involuntary mortifications help us to make up for our shortcomings in other respects. A good many kind people, many of them entirely unknown to us, seem inclined to help us. God bless them and help them at their need ! ”

5 November, 1887 : “ We have had a terrible week. On Saturday last I went ashore to hear a young man’s confession, who had not attended his duty for some time, and stayed there to say Mass next day, for only him and my acolyte. We went to Mynytho to preach in the afternoon and had a very poor attendance. I have made up my mind to go to them, as they will not come to me, and in the spring will do it by reciting the rosary with some of my brethren, with the cross borne before us and a bell to mark the mysteries.

This will of course gather a crowd, and then I shall preach. I used to do this in the wild places in Portugal ; and I shall do it here, please God. It began to blow on Sunday night, and was too rough for us to return in our little dinghy on Monday. The wrecking of our large boat is a terrible loss to us.”*

It was the beginning of the end already. Father Hughes caught a chill, and on December 16 was dead. His community was dispersed and, so far as human eye could discern, his labours for the conversion of his countrymen forgotten and without fruit. He was looked upon as a wild and unpractical visionary by most Catholics but always commanded immense respect among Protestants. Prayer and faith were not merely the foundation of his labours ; they *were* his labours. He never begged on behalf of his good works ; if people were generous, he thanked them and God : if not, then he “ did without ”.

He was buried in the cemetery of Llanengan church, near Abersoch, and a *requiem* was celebrated for him there among the graves of the Catholic and Protestant Welsh of many generations. His gravestone was set up by the Hon. Augusta Herbert of Llanofor, with inscriptions in Welsh and English.

* The extracts from Father Hughes's letters are taken from *Cennad Catholig Cymru*, 1912.

CHAPTER IX

THE SECOND WELSH VICARIATE

IN a pastoral letter to his flock at Easter 1895 Mgr. Hedley announced that "by a brief of the Sovereign Pontiff, dated March of the present year, the six counties of North Wales and five of the counties of South Wales are severed from the dioceses of Shrewsbury and Newport, to which they respectively belonged, and formed into a vicariate apostolic."

The reasons for this change were chiefly two, namely the difficulties of travelling from one end to the other of the Newport diocese and the need of encouraging Welsh Catholics and making an appeal to their non-Catholic fellows by the creation of a definitely Welsh ecclesiastical division under a Welsh bishop. Neither of these reasons was completely convincing to all concerned. Granted the difficulty of getting from Cardiff to Aberystwyth, to get from Wrexham to Pembroke Dock (as the new bishop would have to do) would be even more troublesome and time-wasting; while the no-popery agitation at the restoration of the hierarchy in 1850 had shown that non-Catholics were not necessarily gratified by the Pope of Rome's recognition of their existence. As for the Welsh Catholics, they were fewer than ever and even the more remote missions were predominantly foreign; the Church in Wales was Anglo-Irish in personnel, and there was no reason to

suppose that in any circumstances it was likely yet to become anything else.

These facts seem to have governed the views of Mgr. Hedley and there was much cogency in the argument ; Cardinal Vaughan, on the other hand, who had far from lost interest in his country under the stress of the great duties and responsibilities he had been called on to undertake elsewhere, was a warm supporter of the movement for the Welsh vicariate which, though it appears to have been regarded as a novelty at the time, was actually only a return to the condition of 1840-50 (with the important difference that Glamorgan, Monmouthshire, and Herefordshire were now to be excluded). The scheme had strong support and, though he was unable enthusiastically to encourage it, Mgr. Hedley did not feel called upon to raise serious objection ; it was accordingly approved at Rome and carried through by the apostolic brief *De animarum salute* of March 4, 1895.

In the course of the pastoral letter above referred to Mgr. Hedley reviewed the conditions which had led to this change. He points out that the eleven counties of Wales concerned require rather different treatment and methods of approach than the industrial areas of the south-west, and that no bishop and body of clergy could be either free or versatile enough adequately to cater for both at the same time. This is a very true observation, and represents indeed an ample justification for the partition of the diocese of Newport & Menevia. What in spite of the difficulties he had been enabled himself to do for the remoter parts of his diocese the bishop goes on to show when he says, " At this moment there are six or eight young students, Welsh-speaking, who look forward to taking their share

in the holy work of the missionary. In Brittany, where the Catholic branch of the Welsh race still show themselves the best Christians of all France, there are priests and religious who are preparing themselves to 'come over and help us'. In one or two places of South Wales there are already, like an advance-guard, missions zealously served—such as Carmarthen, Tenby, Aberystwyth, Brecon—which will receive new life and vigour from the words of the Sovereign Pontiff and the zeal of the new pastor." But in Glamorgan, where in 1840 there were a few Catholic congregations gathered together in rooms and lofts but not a single church, it was not a matter of "promise" and "one or two places". In that county there were now more than twenty churches, every one of them built by Irish immigrants for their own use, and having no direct influence on the possible conversion of the Welsh; they were naturally grouped with the churches and missions of Monmouthshire and Herefordshire, where the original Welsh Catholic element had been long ago swamped by the English and Irish. Thus reasonably did Mgr. Hedley explain and justify the exclusion of Glamorgan and Monmouth from the new Welsh vicariate.

The vicar apostolic appointed was Francis Joseph Mostyn, fourth son of Sir Pyers Mostyn, Talacre, the eighth baronet. Father Mostyn was then only thirty-five years of age. He had been educated at Oscott and Ushaw, ordained in 1884, and sent as curate to his cousin Mgr. Slaughter at our Lady's, Birkenhead, where he became missionary rector in 1891. The appointment was very popular. "As an ardent Welshman and an accomplished musician", said the *Universe*, "he will be *persona grata* to a patriotic and music-loving people like the Welsh", and informed its

readers that Father Mostyn's "fine tenor voice" had been heard at the Caernarfon *eisteddfod* in the previous year. The *Liverpool Daily Post*, a newspaper having a large circulation among the Welsh both of Lerpwell and North Wales, wrote, "In converting the principality into an apostolic vicariate, Leo XIII could hardly have hit upon a happier choice or selected one more suited by birth and position to rule the Catholics of North and South Wales than Bishop Mostyn. Young, active, and industrious, possessed of high administrative powers, with his heart in his work and with a thorough knowledge of the country, its people, and its language, the new Bishop of Ascalon and Vicar Apostolic of Wales may be relied upon to advance the cause of his Church in the best possible manner and at the same time to uphold the dignity of the exalted position which he has been called upon to fill."

Cardinal Vaughan paying a visit to Llandrindod in August of this year, the Cardiff *Western Mail* took the opportunity to interview him upon the subject of Catholic developments in Wales. He explained the action of the Holy See at considerable length, emphasizing that ecclesiastically "Wales ought to be treated as an independent state rather than as a mere appendage of England", and expressing the opinion that insufficient attention had been given during the previous fifty years to Wales as the country of the Welsh. He said of Mgr. Mostyn that he was "a Welshman who will represent the Catholic Church to the Welsh people not by boisterous and hostile proceedings but by kindness, sympathy, and consideration". Certainly Cardinal Vaughan did not intend to imply by these words that such sort of proceedings had characterized the rule of Mgr. T. J. Brown or Mgr. Hedley, or Mgr. James Brown

or Mgr. Knight—very far from it; but he was conscious of the harm that is done to the reputation of the Church among non-Catholics by noisy and unfriendly controversialists within her ranks, and he knew that such would receive no countenance from the new vicar apostolic.

The other side of the picture was shown in *Y Baner ac Amserau Cymru* ("The Welsh Standard and Times") which came out with a terrific onslaught on Pope and Bishop, under the title of "The attack of Antichrist on Wales". Now that those who seriously identify the Catholic Church with Antichrist and the Whore of Babylon are so few as to be of no consequence, this diatribe can be read with nothing but amusement, amusement tinged with a certain admiration at what is a museum specimen of fierce and biting invective prompted by an indignation that was as honest and subjectively righteous as it was mistaken and objectively false.

Nevertheless, in spite of these and other evidences of public interest, it cannot be said that the change in the status of Wales provoked any general enthusiasm, for or against. The public at large took little or no notice of it, English and Irish Catholics were unconcerned, and the few Welsh ones knew too much to expect to see any notable results.

On September 14 Father Mostyn was consecrated bishop at Birkenhead by Cardinal Vaughan, Mgr. Hedley and Mgr. Carroll of Shrewsbury being the co-consecrators. The sermon preached by Mgr. Hedley can be read in his *Light of Life* (Burns Oates & Washbourne). He had no doubt that humanly speaking there was no chance for the conversion of Wales, but it was befitting the occasion that he should dwell rather



MGR. FRANCIS J. MOSTYN, D.D.
Second Archbishop of Cardiff and Metropolitan of Wales.
Elected 1921.

on the over-ruling might of Heaven. He reminded his hearers, representative of all aspects of the Church in Wales, that the Welsh had lost the Faith neither through persecution nor the corruption of avarice nor through sheer degeneration : it had died a lingering death from starvation ; there had been no movement of the people as a whole towards Protestantism. Evidence of what Catholicism had been to the Welsh could be seen in their history and throughout their countryside and literature. " Is it a dream ", he asked, " that these missing elements in their Christianity can be restored to the people of Wales ? And are we, who pray and labour for this object, mere benighted visionaries who feed our fancy upon echoes of the past ? We do not think so." But that restoration was possible only over a long period of time, in which their prayers and their work must be reinforced by the visitations of God to his people ; such a visitation was the consecration to the episcopate of Francis Mostyn.

On the same day Mgr. Mostyn issued his first pastoral letter, written in Welsh and English, in which he reviewed the past history and present position of the Church in his territory, and on the following Sunday celebrated his first solemn Mass as a bishop in the same church in which he had been ordained and consecrated ; " the choir ", we are told, " sang Haydn's Mass No. III accompanied by a full orchestra ".

In the following year the title of the diocese of Newport & Menevia became simply Newport, and in 1898 the Welsh vicariate, which had remained attached to the province of Westminster, was erected into a diocese, suffragan to Westminster, with the title of Menevia. The episcopal residence was already fixed at Wrexham, where the church of our Lady of Sorrows

in Regent Street now became the pro-cathedral. Mgr. Mostyn was translated from his titular see of Ascalon to the new see, and so became in name as well as in fact, successor of the mediæval bishops of Saint Davids and of those earlier Welsh bishops who had had their seat at Mynyw, back to Dewi Sant himself.

At the time of the partition of the southern diocese there were in Glamorgan, Monmouthshire, and Herefordshire 38 secular and 30 regular priests, 56 churches and chapels, 12 convents, and some 45,000 or more Catholics ; in the rest of Wales, 19 secular and about 12 effective regular priests, 32 churches and chapels, 4 convents, and some 6000 faithful.

CHAPTER X

TWO DIOCESES AGAIN

MENEVIA UNDER MGR. MOSTYN

AT the time of the creation of the second Welsh vicariate and then of the diocese of Menevia the development of the watering-places on the North Wales coast was in full swing ; this meant a considerable increase of resident Catholics, to say nothing of the needs of the visitors. This condition had been to a large extent already provided for by the foundation of the missions at Rhyl, Llandudno, and Colwyn Bay and, with the exception of a new one in Anglesey, there was a lull in fresh activity here for some years. The new ecclesiastical division had been made and Mgr. Mostyn appointed to govern it with the specific object of opening a more convenient avenue of approach to Welsh Wales, and his first and most important attempts to make use of it were by means of the Breton mission and St. Mary's College at Holywell.

The Breton mission was made possible by the munificence of the Hon. Mrs. Herbert, Llanofer, and two Oblates of Mary Immaculate from Quimper, Fathers Trébaol and Mérour, landed at Holyhead on August 28, 1900. It was not till fifteen months later, on December 1, 1901, that Father Trébaol was established at *Llanrwst* in the Conwy valley, where there was one known Catholic. In the following year Father

Mérour went to Blaenau Ffestiniog, a slate-quarrying centre in northern Merioneth and as Welsh a place as can be found, and his reception was so hostile and the outlook so unpromising that in 1903 he moved to Pwllheli, where the chapel built in 1879 had been for ten years without a resident pastor.

The Breton fathers did useful pioneer work among the Welsh of these districts, till they were recalled to France on the outbreak of war in 1914. Thereupon the Llanrwst mission was closed, later to become dependent upon Trefriw (see p. 166). Pwllheli prospered slowly because of the increasing numbers of holiday-makers who came there and to Nefin, Abersoch, Criccieth, and Borth y Gest, and in 1928 a new church was opened.

In 1910 Father Trébaol started a four-page parish magazine, the *Cennad Catholig Cymru*, "Welsh Catholic Messenger". A year later it had grown to sixteen pages, and was circulating all over North Wales. This unique publication was printed in Welsh and English, and had from time to time Breton and Cornish features as well. Its aim was primarily devotional, but it published historical and apologetic matter (of very uneven worth), and among its contributors were Mgr. Hook, J. Hobson Matthews, and Henry Jenner. It eventually came to an end when the Oblate editor left the country.

During his thirteen years at Llanrwst Father Trébaol enlarged his flock from one to 120 souls, but the Breton mission cannot be said to have been a great success. If I may judge from a study of the pages of the *Cennad* I would hazard that one reason was an insufficient understanding by the missionaries of Protestantism and Welsh religious mentality. Both the fathers spoke Welsh fluently and had an admirable

sympathy with their British cousins ; but to speak Welsh is not enough. Certainly so far as the printed word is concerned they, in another sense, "spoke a different language." It is to be feared that they did not make enough of the religious ground common to Catholicism and Protestantism, and that they put forward certain aspects of Catholicism (some of them of very secondary importance) without sufficiently preparing their hearers to receive them : things so strange to Welsh ears that the hearers were simply shocked. But personally the missionaries were popular, and I have heard Welsh Protestants speak of Father Trébaol with a respect bordering on veneration.

Mgr. Mostyn had long wanted to establish a college for young aspirants to the priesthood, wherein the special needs of Wales should be taken into consideration, when he was at last enabled to do so by the generosity of Miss Sankey, of the Sankeys of Denbigh. She gave to the diocese an estate of 70 acres called The Fron at Holywell, whereon was a large house which had once been the Holywell Bank. This had been for a time in occupation of some refugee nuns from France, Sacramentines expelled from Bernay in 1903, "who, to say the least," in the words of a contemporary memorandum, "did not improve it as a habitable resort"; they were afterwards for some years at Whitsun Court, Monmouthshire.

When the time came to appoint a rector for the proposed college Mgr. Mostyn at first approached Dr. Herbert Vaughan, nephew of the Cardinal and elder brother of the present Bishop of Menevia, but he, though keen on the work, was unable to be spared from Westminster ; thereupon choice was made of the Rev. Paul Edward Hook, then pastor of Neath,

who indeed seemed to be the very man for the job. He was born at Hereford in 1872 of English parents (his mother was a Pye of Harvington), but he claimed Welsh blood through a grandmother Thomas and he was "completely, even bigotedly, Welsh in thought, outlook, and aspiration" and "the conversion of Wales was his one interest;" he had a genius for picking up colloquial tongues, but of Welsh he made a serious study as well, extending it to the national literature, archæology, and history. He was a valued friend of several of the leading Welsh scholars, especially of Professor Thomas Gwynn Jones.

Father Hook began life as a journalist on the *Hereford Times* but soon threw it up and went first to St. Joseph's High School at Cardiff and then to the Urban College of the Propaganda Congregation at Rome; the ill-health that dogged him all his life compelled his return to England, where he finished his theological studies under the Rev. Athanasius Rogers at Leominster and was ordained priest at Belmont in 1897. After being curate at St. David's, Cardiff, and for a few months at Llanarth under Joseph Exton, he was appointed to Neath, where he built new schools for the mission. Upon being made rector of the college he was given as assistant the Rev. Denis Joseph Quigley, then a deacon at Oscott (and now a canon of Cardiff and rector of Barry Dock), who had learnt Welsh at St. Joseph's. He was soon ordained priest and together with Father Hook set to work to convert the Fron house into a school. St. Mary's College was formally opened in the autumn of 1904, with something under a dozen students. Its object was to be a junior seminary "in which students for the Welsh missions could get a thorough grounding in Welsh";

in other respects its course of studies was the usual one in such institutions. Among its earliest students were Sylvester Baron, Leopold Cunningham, and Joseph Brunton.

The school was inspected and favourably reported on by Mr. Francis Morley, of Cambridge University, in 1905 and 1906, but in the following year the rector was gravely ill with typhoid and Dr. John Jarvis (now Canon Jarvis, Cwmbran) was sent as temporary assistant. During this time the boys carried on part of their studies at the friary of the Capuchins at Pantasaph, with whom the college was very closely in touch all the time it was at Holywell. For some years after his retirement Father I. H. Jones, Caernarfon, helped with the teaching of Welsh—though, like so many other good scholars, he was not a satisfactory teacher. In 1907 Father Quigley was recalled to his diocese by Mgr. Hedley and his place was taken by Dr. Jarvis, who carried on the work of the college while Father Hook was chaplain to the 53rd (Welsh) Division, during the European war. Father Hook's health, always bad, was permanently worsened in Gallipoli, and in 1921 he retired from the rectorship, his place being taken by Father Oswald Lofthouse, an "old boy" of the college.

Father Hook's years of work for the clergy in Wales were recognized on his retirement by his being created a domestic prelate to Pope Benedict XV, and in the same year he received another honour, which may be said to have been the crown of his ambition: he was admitted a member of the *gorsedd* of the bards of Wales, taking the title of "Henffordd". During his time at St. Mary's College he had been rigid in his enforcement of its special aim: "Welsh prayers were said in the

chapel, the rosary and hymns were said and sung in *yr iaith Paradwys*; the boys were taught to use the language in every-day life; the story and fame of *Cymru gynt* was the burden of many a lesson and tale." His published literary work was pretty well confined to a selection of Catholic hymns in Welsh, which he compiled and partly translated, and contributions to the *Cennad*; the results of his researches into Welsh religious history and literature were never reduced to order. While rector at Holywell he gained the degree of doctor of philosophy from the Urban College in Rome.

From 1921 till 1928 Mgr. Hook was rector at Aberystwyth, where he was held in very high esteem by the professorial staff of the constituent college of the University of Wales, as he was by the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion of which he was an active member for many years. The last two active years of his life were spent at Machynlleth in western Montgomeryshire, where there was a handful of Catholics, and the impression he made in that small very Welsh town was profound. So far as his health would allow he took part in all the cultural activities so dear to the Welsh, the Young People's Society and so on, and cultivated the acquaintance of the numerous Protestant ministers, with one of whom he was particularly friendly; he was a ready subscriber to all good works, interested in all local affairs, and especially devoted to the needy—"Father Hook" is still a name to conjure with in the poorer quarters of the place. There was but one convert there during his time but that did not worry him: he knew that it was still a question of clearing the ground rather than reaping a harvest. It has been said of Cardinal Manning that, at a time when

English people on the whole believed that every priest is untrustworthy or worse, he gave England "the vision of a good priest"; just so did Mgr. Hook in his smaller world. Catholics are still an object of curiosity in Machynlleth—but they are no longer objects of suspicion or ill-will, or supposed to be of necessity foreigners from England or Ireland or further afield. There are not wanting those who, while admitting Hook's talent and versatility, consider that he was over-rated. He may have been by some; but the fact is that his intransigent Welshness did not commend him to those who were impatient of "all this Welsh stuff" or to those who thought that, with so many Catholics who needed ministration, the only thing to do was to leave the Welsh to themselves. He was apt to excite opposition—and love too; his memory is cherished among his old students and many others, and his fundamental humility of spirit was well symbolized by the black Benedictine habit which he so often wore (he was an oblate of Belmont) in preference to the violet of his prelate's cassock.

In the summer of 1930 Mgr. Hook had a stroke, and he was removed to the hospital of the Sisters of the Temple at Clifton; he never ceased to look forward to his return to Machynlleth and was pathetically sure it would be soon. It was in fact never; he died at Clifton on March 7, 1933, being only sixty-one years old.

Soon after Father Lofthouse took over St. Mary's College it was moved from Holywell to Aberystwyth, where it was housed in a lovely position on Constitution Hill overlooking the town and Cardigan Bay; it was reopened by Mgr. Mostyn, by then become archbishop of Cardiff, in February 1923. The number of students

soon reached 18, and some of them attended lectures in Welsh and other subjects at the University College. In 1929 Father Lofthouse was succeeded by Father Michael McGrath, m.a., an extremely able student of Welsh history and life, who had as assistant first Dr. David Crowley and then Father Brendan Osborne.

Unhappily the history of St. Mary's College has come to an end ; the prevalent economic conditions bear particularly hardly on a diocese like Menevia and such an institution, though small, is a serious strain on its financial resources : and the school was closed last year. During its lifetime of thirty years it has always remained small, the number of students never exceeding twenty. Some eighteen priests in the two dioceses of Wales did their preliminary studies there, and several more are now taking their philosophy and theology in various seminaries ; but the fact that, however difficult the times, it was closed seems to indicate that the results accruing from the college have not been so satisfactory as was hoped. This may be because circumstances did not allow of its being developed on a sufficiently large scale or because its very establishment was premature ; in any case it was a brave experiment and, if the priests it has nurtured are few, at any rate they are a valuable acquisition to the Church in Wales who for many years yet will perpetuate the memory of St. Mary's College.

The mission in Anglesey referred to at the beginning of this chapter was at *Beaumaris* (Biwmares),* where the Oblate fathers from Holyhead began to celebrate Mass in 1898 at the town hall. Later on it was served from Bangor, whose rector the Rev. W. F. Finucane

* The Venerable William Davies, priest, was hung, drawn, and quartered here on July 21, 1593.

superintended the building of the church of our Lady Queen of Martyrs in Rating Row in 1910. Since then it has a resident priest, who as well serves the church of St. Winefride at *Amlwch*. At the other end of the country the construction of the harbour and increasing importance of *Fishguard* (Welsh, Abergwaun) as a port for Ireland necessitated the establishment of a mission there. The development of *Prestatyn* on the Flintshire coast brought a church there in 1903; it was built at the cost of Sir Pyers Mostyn, Talacre.

A watering-place that gave great concern to the ecclesiastical authorities for many years was *Barmouth* (Abermaw) in Merioneth, which from being a thriving little port had fallen on evil days till it was resuscitated (undergoing a grievous change in the process) by the patronage of Ruskin, Darwin, Tennyson, and other distinguished and royal persons. The first attempt to provide for visitors had been in 1880, at the holiday-house of the Jesuit students at Llanaber, a neighbouring village. From 1885 to 1895 a priest used to come over from Ireland during the summer, and eventually a chapel was provided, till in 1897 Father Wilcock set himself to provide an adequate church. It was four years before he could even get a site for it, owing to local ill-will against Catholicism (and also partly owing to a shortage of suitable building-sites in a place that is jammed in between a sheer cliff and the sea); but his perseverance and geniality overcame all obstacles and he succeeded in building a church and presbytery which, whatever one's opinion of their architectural merits, are solidly constructed and vast for a place of the size of Barmouth. The personality of Father Wilcock wrought such a change in public opinion that when they were opened in 1905 he was

able to have a public procession ; the church was consecrated in 1909, under the name of St. Tudwal. Unfortunately Father Wilcock in a manner of speech did his work too well. Barmouth once again is not what it was ; its popularity has decreased and the type of visitor is different, so that the parish priest finds the upkeep of the church and house a very great burden—for the “season” is short and resident Catholics less than a score.

Mass was first offered at *Penmaenmawr* in 1903, and after they gave up Colwyn Bay the nascent mission was handed over to the Capuchins. They built a church in 1906, and two years later established a friary in connection therewith, which has some half-dozen members. From *Penmaenmawr* they serve *Llanfairfechan*, where there is not yet a permanent church. They were also given charge of *Conway*, where for several years Mass had been said by priests from Colwyn Bay or *Llandudno*, and they definitely established the mission there in 1907. A new church was opened in 1916, which has now a resident secular priest.

From 1895 until 1911 the spa in Radnorshire called *Llandrindod Wells* was served from time to time first from Carmarthen and then from Brecon, Mass being offered at the Rock hotel, where Cardinal Vaughan was a frequent visitor during the later years of his life. In 1907 a presbytery was obtained and a chapel fitted up in it, which four years later received its first resident priest in the person of Father Thomas Patrick Kane, s.j., a Limerick man and brother to the famous blind preacher Father Robert Kane, s.j. Father Thomas distinguished himself by preaching in Welsh and was elected to the *gorsedd* of the bards of Wales. *Llandrindod* passed to the care of the secular clergy with

the other Jesuit missions ; Mass is now provided from here in an hotel at *Builth Wells*. *Connah's Quay* at the mouth of the Dee was first served in 1910 by the Rev. Austin Pozzi from Flint, whose energy enabled a church to be opened in the following year. The industrial area of *Ammanford* (a translation of the Welsh name, Rhydaman) was first served by the Passionists from Carmarthen, and a church was opened there in 1914. It now has a secular priest, who also ministers to the Catholics of *Gwaun Cae Gurwen* and *Ystradgynlais*, in neither of which places is there yet a permanent church. *Burry Port* also owes its first mission to the Passionists and has had a resident priest since 1918.

The cathedral chapter of the diocese of Menevia was erected on August 10, 1909 ; it consists of a provost and six canons who, as usual in Great Britain, are dispensed from residence at the cathedral in order that they may be available to minister in the principal parishes.

In the previous year an important modification had taken place in the status of the Church in England and Wales. At the restoration of the hierarchy in 1850 the new dioceses had continued to form a missionary country in the technical sense : that is to say, they were not subject to the common law of the Western church but were under the jurisdiction of the missionary Congregation *de Propaganda Fide*. Now they took their normal place under the Consistorial Congregation, which is concerned with whatever relates to the ordinary dioceses of the Roman patriarchate ; henceforward the English and Welsh "missions" were parishes and their pastors rectors. Then by the apostolic letter *Si qua est* of October 28, 1911, the

hierarchical organization of England and Wales was re-arranged in accordance with new needs that had arisen. Two fresh provinces were erected, with their metropolitan sees at Birmingham and Liverpool, certain privileges and duties being reserved in perpetuity to the archbishop of Westminster. The dioceses of Newport and Menevia under this arrangement were made suffragan to Birmingham, together with Clifton, Plymouth, and Shrewsbury, the other eight dioceses being divided between Westminster and Liverpool. At this time the approximate statistics of the Welsh dioceses were : *Newport* (including Herefordshire) : population of Catholics 50,000 ; clergy, 40 secular, 44 regular (15 Benedictines and 14 Rosminians working in the parishes) ; churches and stations 77, convents 20. *Menevia* : population of Catholics 8,500 ; clergy, 29 secular, 59 regular (more than half of these not working in the parishes) ; churches and stations 43 ; convents 14.

NEWPORT UNDER MGR. HEDLEY

Mgr. Hedley, though advancing in age, carried on his duties with unremitting vigour ; his spiritual determination and robust constitution enabled him to do so in spite of the fact that a rheumatism that attacked one of his legs about 1870 gradually all but deprived him of the use of it : for thirty years it gave him almost constant pain and seriously hampered his bodily movements.* In 1912 he celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination as a priest. In a letter

* He once remarked casually, " I have many falls, but I put my hands in front of my face and fall on my stomach and no harm is done." (Wilson's *Life*, p. 366).

of congratulation Pope Pius X spoke of the careful judgement, pastoral solicitude, and personal integrity which had won for him "the garland of a flourishing renown", and that regard was expressed in a very sure voice by the public recognition of his jubilee at Cardiff and elsewhere.

In 1898 the ever enterprising Fathers of Charity founded St. Alban's parish in the Splotlands district of Cardiff, where a new church was opened in 1911 which they still serve, and in 1899 a chapel-of-ease was given to *Morrison* (Treforus), which is served from St. Joseph's, Swansea. Five years later the Benedictines of St. David's in the same place established a chapel-of-ease at *Mumbles*, in a rented building that had been in turn a Calvinistic-Methodist chapel, a Plymouth Brethren's meeting-house, and a Church of England boys' club. The church of our Lady Star of the Sea at Mumbles now has a resident Benedictine priest. A chapel was opened at *Merthyr Vale* in 1908, replaced by a new church in recent years, and in the same year the Benedictines founded the parish of *Clydach*. Dom Antony Cox built the church and presbytery there, which were opened in 1915 and handed over to the secular clergy in 1930. The third Newport parish, St. Patrick's, was established by the Fathers of Charity in 1909.

The memory of the local shrine of our Lady of Penrhys, whose holy well is in the parish, is perpetuated at *Ferndale*, on the east side of Cefn y Rhondda, where the Rev. W. Morgan began work in 1910; this church has a chapel-at-ease at *Maerdy*, further up the valley. A seventh church in Cardiff, St. Joseph's, was established by the Fathers of Charity in 1913, and a parish was formed by the secular clergy

at *Senghenydd* in 1914. In the same year Mgr. Hedley invited the monks of Caermaria to take charge of the new parish of *Caerphilly* (founded 1912). Three priests and a lay-brother were at once sent, and the Breton Benedictines continued to minister there till they were finally recalled to their home in 1921. The last foundation of a church before the European war put a temporary stop to further development was at *Bargoed* (1915).

In July 1914 the National Catholic Congress took place at Cardiff, and if it be true, as a Catholic newspaper asserted, that there appeared to be less public enthusiasm than is usual on these occasions, the proceedings of the congress itself were nevertheless equal in merit to those of any that have taken place elsewhere. The members of the congress were publicly and officially welcomed by the Lord Mayor of Cardiff, supported by the Bishop of Newport, when there were present in the Park Hall Cardinal Bourne and Cardinal Gasquet, the Archbishops of Birmingham and Liverpool, the Bishops of Clifton, Hexham & Newcastle, Leeds, Menevia, Northampton, Plymouth, Salford, and Southwark, the titular Bishops of Cambysopolis, Lamus, and Sebastopolis, the Cathedral Prior of Belmont, the fourth Marquess of Bute, k.t., Major-General Sir Ivor Herbert, m.p., Lord Ninian Crichton-Stuart, m.p., and many others of the clergy and laity of Wales and England. During the congress papers were read by Mgr. Burton of Clifton on Catholicism in Wales a hundred years before, by Father Paul Hook on the early British church, and by Mr. J. E. de Hirsch-Davies on mediæval Welsh Catholicism,* forceful addresses

* This paper was afterwards expanded into a book. See bibliography.

were given by Mgr. Keating of Northampton, Father Henry Day, s.j., and Father Charles Plater, s.j., on the condition of the working classes, and among others who contributed at the general meetings were Fathers Cuthbert Lattey and Herbert Thurston, s.j., and Canon Gwydir, o.s.b., rector of St. Mary's, Canton, who a few months later was drowned in the wreck of the hospital ship Rohilla, off Whitby. But the outstanding contribution to religious thought was the aged and weakening Mgr. Hedley's paper on the Holy Eucharist, some parts of which, wherein he emphasizes the interiorly unifying principle of the Blessed Sacrament, seem almost prophetically adapted to the strengthening of the souls of the faithful in the tornado of hate and destruction that was about to break over Europe.

The war was, in his own words, a constant nightmare to Mgr. Hedley, and both his last pastorals were concerned with it ; in the one he wrote of the duties of Christians to their country, in the other of the need for prayer, especially public prayer, and trust in the wisdom and goodness of God. Some months later, on November 11, 1915, Mgr. Hedley died at Llanishen after several months of illness. He had ordered that he should be buried from his parish-church, St. Peter's, Roath, and, after a *requiem* sung by the Archbishop of Birmingham in the presence of Cardinal Bourne, his body was borne through thronged streets to the resting-place he had chosen in the public cemetery.

John Cuthbert Hedley was in his seventy-ninth year when he died, and he had shepherded the diocese of Newport for thirty-four years, after being auxiliary bishop there for eight. When he succeeded Mgr. Brown in 1881 there were only thirteen secular priests (most of them borrowed from elsewhere) in the territory

that became the diocese of Newport, and forty-seven churches and stations; he left fifty-four secular priests and eighty churches and chapels. Ten convents of nuns and the good works that go with them had been established, numerous schools had been opened, the administrative side of his charge was in excellent order and financially sound as he had received it. Spiritual statistics there are and can be none. Father Daniel Hickey, now provincial of the Institute of Charity, a beloved priest in Newport, wrote of him: "When anyone in trouble went to Bishop Hedley for counsel, for comfort, even for expected and deserved rebuke, he had revealed to him the warm and tender heart of a true father in God. Affectionate solicitude, sound advice, generous encouragement, delicate courtesy, all were there. . . . His love for the people whom God had given into his hand was genuine and deep . . . nothing that affected their welfare, spiritual and temporal, did he hold of little account. His flock was ever his main thought. It was for them he studied and wrote and preached."* It is not necessary to say what was the concern of the author of *Lex Levitarum* for the body of devoted clergy which he slowly and painfully built up for South Wales. What stands out is his sympathy and kindness for those of them who stumbled or fell in their toilsome task: Father Wilson records his reproving words to the vicar general who demurred at receiving for his curate a priest who was in trouble: "You will sacrifice yourself night and day for your erring people, but you will not stretch out your hand to help a priest!"

The name of Hedley will never be forgotten while

* He made the official English translation of Leo XIII's encyclical on the state of the working people, *Rerum novarum*.

there are Catholics in South Wales (to invoke a no larger world). We have the testimony of one who lived with him at Llanishen that he used to do around there all the work of a parish priest, and would get together the children scattered on the hill-sides of Caerphilly to teach them Christian doctrine and prepare them for their first communion. There and thus we may leave him, remembering the words of the Welsh triad, "There are three men whom all ought to love : he that looks with joy upon the face of the earth, he that is delighted by rational works of art, and he that looks lovingly upon babes."

CHAPTER XI

THE WELSH PROVINCE

i. CARDIFF

SOME years after the division of his diocese in 1895 Mgr. Hedley had been disturbed by a suggestion that it should (in effect) be done away with altogether by joining Glamorgan to the rest of Wales. Nothing came of it, but at the time the bishop wrote down a statement which so excellently sums up the situation that it is reprinted in full here.*

DIOCESE OF NEWPORT

“The principality of Wales consists of twelve counties. Monmouth is civilly outside Wales, although historically and ethnically it is really a Welsh county.

Up to 1895, the six counties of North Wales belonged to the diocese of Shrewsbury, and the six of South Wales to that of Newport & Menevia. In 1895, the late Cardinal Vaughan conceived the idea that Wales ought to have a vicar apostolic of its own. Wales, he considered, was a missionary country in a more strict sense than England in general. It was more sparsely inhabited, Catholicism was more feeble, and the Welsh people had a peculiar national character of their own. Hence he urged that it would

* From Wilson's *Life of Bishop Hedley*, p. 136, by kind permission of the Abbot of Ampleforth.

be advisable to give Wales a bishop of its own, a vicar apostolic, who might have a free hand to deal with it as a missionary country.

It was represented to him, however, that the county of Glamorgan differed altogether from the other Welsh counties. It was far more populous—as populous, indeed, as England on the average; Catholicism was represented by a flock, a clergy, churches and schools, equal in number to the general English average, and the population was far from being distinctively Welsh. Hence, on the recommendation of the Cardinal, with the consent of the Bishops of Shrewsbury and Newport & Menevia, the Holy See decreed, in 1895, that a vicariate should be formed, consisting of the principality of Wales without the county of Glamorgan, viz. of eleven counties of Wales only.

Whatever the value of the reasons which, in 1895, caused the exclusion of Glamorgan from the vicariate of Wales, those reasons are still cogent. The population of Glamorgan is (census 1911) 1,130,668. The population of the other five counties of South Wales is 390,568. The Catholic population of Glamorgan is 46,410; that of the other counties of South Wales 2266 (about). In Glamorgan there are twenty-five missions with resident priests; in the other five counties of South Wales there are ten missions with resident priests. The population is even less distinctly Welsh than it was twenty years ago.

It is also to be observed that if it be the object to form Wales into one diocese, it would be a mistake to leave out Monmouthshire. Monmouthshire, in the character of its population as in its history, is absolutely as Welsh as Glamorgan or any of the counties of South Wales. The same may be said of a large portion of Herefordshire. Simply, therefore, to take away Glamorgan, and add it to Menevia, would

still leave a large part of the ancient municipality of Wales outside the Welsh diocese.

The formation (geographical) of Wales is such that its north extremity is a very long way from its south. On account of the intervening mountain ranges, the railway journey from Bangor, *e.g.*, to Pembroke, is about twelve hours. It is true that, as things are at present, it is a long journey for a bishop residing at Wrexham to visit South Wales ; but if he resided at Cardiff the difficulty would only be shifted, for he would then find it equally difficult to visit North Wales ; and North Wales, in respect of population and Catholicism, is much more important than South Wales (excluding Glamorgan).

The solution of the difficulty might perhaps be found in making the two dioceses into a Welsh province, with its archbishop at Cardiff and Menevia as suffragan. There is some reason for this in the fact that the earliest Christianity in Britain was established in South Wales, and Caerleon, Llandaff, and St. David's were episcopal sees before the time of Saint Augustine.

It would, therefore, appear fitting that Wales should be formed into a separate province, and should no longer be attached to a province of which the metropolitan is Birmingham. If this were done, then, as Menevia would include eleven of the counties of Wales, and Newport (or, if preferred, Cardiff) would take in, as at present, Glamorgan, Monmouth, and Herefordshire, this would be a truly Welsh province. And, if things were so arranged, there would be no need of any uprooting or alteration of existing interests, such as the monastic chapter and other diocesan institutions."

This scheme for a Welsh province was brought forward privately during the Cardiff Congress in 1914

and strongly taken up. Later in the year, when he was at Ampleforth and could discuss it with some of the Benedictine superiors (who were directly interested in it on account of the position of the Belmont priory), Mgr. Hedley definitely gave his adhesion to the project and, with the support of the other ecclesiastical authorities, petitioned the Holy See on its behalf early in 1915. The idea was obviously a sound and proper one, and the death of Mgr. Hedley provided a convenient, though in the circumstances sad and unwelcome, opportunity to put it into execution. This was done by the apostolic letter *Cambria celtica* of February 7, 1916. Its text was as follows:

“BENEDICT BISHOP

SERVANT OF THE SERVANTS OF GOD

FOR A PERPETUAL MEMORIAL

Wales, a nation of Celtic origin, differs so much from the rest of England in language, traditions, and ancient customs that it would seem in the ecclesiastical order also to call for separation from the other churches and for the possession of its own hierarchy.

With this in mind, the Bishops of the Province of Birmingham recently asked the Apostolic See canonically to separate and exempt from the metropolitan jurisdiction of Birmingham the dioceses of Newport and Menevia, which embrace all Wales, and to constitute them a new ecclesiastical province.

In accordance with their wishes, and after consultation with our venerable brethren the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church of the Sacred Congregation of the Consistory, We have resolved and decreed that the two above-mentioned dioceses be separated in the

aforesaid manner, and by this apostolic letter We do so separate and divide them and constitute them a new ecclesiastical province.

Since it is most fitting that the episcopal seat of the diocese of Newport should be in the city of Cardiff, which is the capital of all Wales and its most important town, We therefore transfer the episcopal seat of Newport to that city and there establish it, and We declare the beautiful church of St. David to be the episcopal cathedral, and order that the diocese of Newport shall in future take its name from the city of Cardiff.

Moreover, We constitute this diocese of Cardiff the metropolitan see of all Wales, with all the rights, privileges and duties which belong to metropolitan sees, and We decide that the see of Menevia be suffragan to it.

For this new province the ordinances shall remain in force which were decreed by Pope Pius X for the furtherance of the unity of ecclesiastical discipline, in the constitution *Si qua est* of October 28, 1911.

A secular chapter shall be constituted in the metropolitan church of St. David, with such laws concerning the number of dignitaries and canons, residence and choir services and the rest, as shall be proposed to the Holy See by the new archbishop one year after his having taken possession of the diocese, and which the Holy See shall have sanctioned.

Since, however, it is only right that the prestige of the renowned Order of St. Benedict, which has done such meritorious work in England and especially in Wales, should not be diminished, We order and decree that the monastic chapter of Belmont, near Hereford, and the episcopal cathedral there erected, be maintained in their present state and continue as hitherto according to the terms of the decree of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda of April 21, 1852,

with such modifications as the Abbot President of the English Congregation of Benedictine Monks shall propose to the Holy See for approval, within the time stated above, and which the Holy See shall have sanctioned. The Archbishop of Cardiff, therefore, will have two chapters, the one secular and the other regular, and two cathedral churches.

The regular chapter shall, according to its own laws, perform its sacred functions in the cathedral church of the monastery, the Prior retaining the privilege of *pontificalia*.

Nevertheless, there must be only one episcopal *curia*. Therefore whatever documents having reference to the state of the diocese were hitherto in the possession of the Bishop of Newport, or were kept at the cathedral at Belmont, must be transferred to the city of Cardiff, into the custody of the Archbishop and of the new *curia* to be there established.

It shall not be lawful for anyone at any time to violate, oppose, or resist what has been decreed by Us with apostolic authority in this letter. Should anyone presume to do so (which God forbid) he must know that he will be liable to the penalties fixed by the sacred canons against those who oppose the exercise of ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

We depute our venerable brother Edward Ilsley, Archbishop of Birmingham, to see that these Our orders are duly carried out and We grant to him all necessary faculties for this purpose, with power to subdelegate to any other ecclesiastical dignitary and to decide definitively in any case of difficulty or opposition which may arise.

We put upon him the obligation of forwarding within six months to the Sacred Congregation of the Consistory a report, drawn up in authentic form, testifying to the complete execution of this Our mandate.

We decree, finally, that this letter shall hold good notwithstanding anything to the contrary, even though worthy of particular and express mention, which may be alleged against it.

GIVEN at Rome at St. Peter's in the year of our Lord One thousand Nine hundred and Sixteen, on the 7th day of the month of February, in the second year of Our pontificate.

(Place of seal).

(Signed) C. CARDINAL DE LAI. BP. SABINA

Secretary of the Sacred Council of the Consistory.

O. CARD. CAGIANO DE AZEVEDO

Chancellor of the Holy Roman Church."

The effect of this act, then, was to transform the diocese of Newport into the archdiocese of Cardiff with metropolitan jurisdiction over the diocese of Menevia ; its cathedral to be the church of St. David (which Mgr. Hedley had rebuilt in 1887), with a chapter of canons and an archiepiscopal curia drawn from the secular clergy. The second cathedral and chapter of Benedictines at Belmont were abolished four years later.

Thus at long last and for the first time in her history Wales had an archbishop,* and if the creation of the

* There is no evidence that the bishop at Saint Davids had ever at any time been an " archbishop and metropolitan with suffragans ". It is clear that Asser, in referring to his predecessor at Mynyw, and Rhygyfarch, in his fabulous account of St. David's consecration at Jerusalem, uses the word " archbishop " merely as a title of honour implying precedence before other Welsh bishops. Geoffrey of Monmouth claimed that David was archbishop, but of Caerleon, so when the metropolitan claims of Saint Davids were being pushed in the twelfth century the ingenious theory was put forward that St. David took the *pallium* from Caerleon to Mynyw—and that St. Samson transferred it to Dol in Brittany ! It is a pity that whoever designed the printed card of the " prayer for Wales " should have labelled St. David as " abp."

Welsh vicariate had aroused no general interest it was different with this latest act of the Holy See. Wales was definitely interested, in some quarters perturbed and angry, but as a whole gratified by the honour and recognition shown to the country by Pope Benedict XV. The public press was naturally guarded in its expression of these views ; the following leader from the *Western Mail* was representative :

The announcement of the appointment of a successor to the late Bishop Hedley is accompanied by another the interest of which is by no means confined to the Church immediately concerned. The name and status of the see are to be changed. Newport has not been the headquarters of the see, and the loss of Newport is, therefore, a merely nominal one. The gain to Cardiff will be material, as well as titular, only if the headquarters are transferred from Belmont in Herefordshire and if episcopal distinction is conferred upon the central church of St. David. In any case Cardiff will be the working head centre of the see as it has been ever since the late Bishop Hedley took up his residence here. But the chief interest of the changes which the Pope has resolved upon attaches to the change of 'dignity. For many years after the constitution of the Roman Catholic hierarchy under Cardinal Wiseman England and Wales formed a single archiepiscopal see under the sway of Westminster. A few years ago the dioceses of Birmingham and Liverpool became archdioceses, and now a similar dignity is conferred upon the see which is to have its headquarters at the capital of Wales. Some surprise has been expressed at this rapid development of archiepiscopal jurisdictions by those familiar only with the Anglican organization, but the development has been made in due conformity with the Roman Catholic custom.

Monsignor Bilborrow . . . though a stranger is sure of a warm welcome from a religious community which is ever distinguished for the devoted loyalty which it bears to its pastors.

Again, from the same newspaper :

The announcement that his Holiness the Pope has created an archbishopric of Cardiff has been received with the utmost gratification by the Roman Catholic community. Nor are members of other communions indifferent to the change, for it is realized not only that the Pope's spiritual subjects have been the recipients of a special mark of favour but that a new setting has been given to the religious institutions of the city and the Principality. An additional mark of interest is derived from the fact that the first Archbishop of Cardiff is not, after all, a stranger to South Wales, for about twenty years ago he laboured for some months in Maesteg, where he had charge of the Roman Catholic mission.

His Lordship won many friends during his short stay in the Llynfi Valley, and he left behind him the impression that his gifts and talents would gain for him high honours and dignity in the hierarchy of the Church. Those anticipations have been realized in a way which could not have been contemplated at the time. It is somewhat remarkable that no less than three of his college contemporaries have laboured at the mission at Maesteg—Canon Kelly, Abbot Taylor, and Father Kelly.

There were many who had hoped and expected that Mgr. Mostyn, who had already been ruling in the greater part of Wales territorially considered for over twenty years, would be the first Welsh metropolitan, but it was probably considered inexpedient to make too violent a break with Benedictine tradition in South

Wales, for at the same time that *Cambria celtica* was published a monk of Woolhampton was named archbishop. This was Mgr. James Romanus Bilsborrow, who was at the time bishop of Port Louis in Mauritius Island, which he had governed as administrator and ordinary for seven years.* He was enthroned and invested with the *pallium* by Mgr. Ilsley, Archbishop of Birmingham, in St. David's cathedral at Cardiff on July 25, 1916, an eloquent sermon being preached by Mgr. Keating, then bishop of Northampton. The *Western Mail* printed the following account of the new metropolitan :

The new archbishop is a native of Preston, and was educated at St. Edmund's, Douai. He was associated with the English Benedictines there—a community which has since removed to Woolhampton (Berks). He entered Douai in 1874, and went through a seven years' course. Then he proceeded to St. Edward's College, Liverpool, and later to Belmont, Herefordshire, for his Benedictine novitiate, being professed in 1884. He remained for a two years' course of philosophy and theology, and then returned to Douai to finish his theological course, after which he was ordained priest.

All through his career as a student he was held in high esteem, and he gained special distinction in philosophy, theology, and rhetoric.

Before going to Maesteg he was at the mission of Liverpool and he left the Llynfi Valley in 1896 with Dr. O'Neill, o.s.b., for Port Louis, Mauritius, where he was vicar-general until 1910. In that year Dr. O'Neill retired through ill-health, and Monsignor Bilsborrow was elevated to the see in his stead. He

* There was a certain historical exchange here. Dom W. B. Scarisbrick who was priest at Hereford in 1858-60, and elsewhere in the Newport diocese, had been promoted to the see of Port Louis.

was consecrated bishop at Douai Abbey, Woolhampton, on February 24, 1911, by Bishop Hedley (whom he is now succeeding in South Wales), with Bishop O'Neill and Bishop Cowgill as assistants. Mauritius has been the centre of Benedictine activity for a century past, and from it Australia was supplied in the days when Botany Bay was a convict settlement. . . . The new archbishop is a nephew of the late Bishop of Salford. He was in his youth a great sportsman. He possesses musical tastes and is an accomplished violinist, even making his own violins. He is also an accomplished linguist. Dr. Bilsborrow is of energetic habits and whilst at Mauritius he had the honour of entertaining King George when Prince of Wales. . . .

The creation of the province of Wales so far from marking an advance was followed by a temporary slowing-down of ecclesiastical activity: the European war was in progress and the Archbishop was handicapped by very bad health. In order to be nearer the centre of things he transferred his residence from Llanishen to the city of Cardiff itself, but after only four years he found the work too much for him and at the end of 1920 he tendered his resignation to the Holy See. It was accepted, and on March 7 in the following year Mgr. Francis Mostyn was translated from Menevia to Cardiff—the second archbishop and the first Welshman. He continued to administer Menevia, rendered vacant by his promotion, for another five years.

During the last year of Mgr. Bilsborrow's rule the monastic chapter at Belmont was dissolved and a metropolitan chapter from the secular clergy erected at Cardiff, consisting of a provost and ten canons

(March 12, 1920). Later in the year Wales was accorded a graceful act by the Holy See that was much appreciated throughout the country. Mr. T. D. Jenkins, Bodhyfryd, during his visits to Rome had interested Mgr. Pucci in the national library at Aberystwyth, with the result that Pope Benedict XV expressed a desire to make it a gift of books. These included a work on the pontifical navy in 10 volumes, a work on the paintings in the Catacombs in 2 volumes, the *acta* of Pope Pius X in 5 volumes, a volume containing the texts of the agreements between the Papacy and various countries from 1098 to 1914, and an autographed portrait of Benedict XV, "as a personal signification of good will to the National Library of Wales". These gifts were formally presented by Mgr. Pucci to the President and Council of the Library on September 24, and were acknowledged on behalf of the Council by Mr. Herbert M. Vaughan in an admirable Latin speech.

At the time of Mgr. Mostyn's succession the statistics of the archdiocese of Cardiff were : 59,640 Catholics ; clergy, 44 secular and 51 regular ; 81 churches, etc. ; 20 convents. The subsequent period has been one of very solid progress in the archdiocese. New parishes have been opened or permanent churches built or resident priests installed at *Bedwas*, served from Caerphilly, and *Dinas Powis* (1922), *Aberkenfig* founded, and still served, by Benedictines in 1923, though Mass had been first offered there in 1878, *Abercynon* (1924) with a station for Mass at *Tynte*, *Pontardulais* (1924) from whence is served *Gorseinon*, St. Teilo's in the *Whitchurch* district of Cardiff and our Lady of Lourdes at Town Hill, Swansea (1925), *Llanhilleth*, served from Abertillery (1926), *Oakdale* (1926) which serves the

old mission of Newbridge, St. Francis's at *Ely*, Cardiff (1927), *Griffithstown* (1927), *Fontigary* (1927), served from Barry Dock, *Landore* (1927), served from St. Joseph's, Swansea, St. Benedict's at *Sketty*, Swansea, a chapel-of-ease to St. David's (1928), *Kenfig Hill* (1929), served from Aberafon (its chapel is dedicated in honour of St. Joseph of Arimathea, whom a late mediæval fiction made the apostle of Britain), *Ynyshir* (1929), and *Rumney* (1931), served from the cathedral. Between 1930 and 1932 four important parishes were taken over by the secular clergy from the English Benedictines. A church was opened at *Maesglas* on the outskirts of Newport in 1934.

This remarkable tale of development testifies more clearly than words can do to the energy and enthusiasm of the Archbishop and his clergy, and to the proper support and co-operation that they have received from the laity. It also increases the justness of a remark by a writer in the *Western Mail* at the consecration of Mgr. Vaughan that "St. David's cathedral at Cardiff is neither a beautiful nor convenient building, least of all for pontifical functions . . . and it is to be hoped that the Roman Catholics of Wales will soon realize the necessity of providing their Archbishop and Metropolitan with a church more worthy of its dignity." What should be a spacious choir and sanctuary is so cramped that accommodation for the stalls of the canons of the metropolitan chapter could at first be found only in the nave, outside the chancel-arch. It may well be, as some maintain, that the building of grand and imposing cathedrals is not a natural and fitting expression of the age in which we live; but it would seem that in Cardiff, which owes its importance and its very existence as a city to commerce and the

developments of a technical civilization, there is an opportunity to demonstrate that the methods characteristic of that civilization can produce impressive churches adequate for divine worship, owing nothing to the "styles" which were a product of the methods and spirit of ages that are now past.

On February 9, 1926, Pope Pius XI recognized the achievements of Mgr. Mostyn's thirty years of episcopate by naming him an assistant at the pontifical throne,* in 1929 he became a Knight of Malta, and on September 14, 1934, the Archbishop celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination as a priest. A supplement to the Cardiff edition of the *Catholic Herald* for September 15 gave, in addition to a memoir, a very valuable list of the churches, presbyteries, schools, parish halls, etc., built or enlarged during his rule.

* *I.e.* a member of the college of selected bishops which forms part of the papal "chapel", the body of persons who attend officially on the pope at certain solemn occasions, such as consistories. Bishops assistant rank after the cardinals and formerly composed a resident *curia* at the Lateran, whence each still bears the title "Count of the Apostolic Palace and Court of the Lateran".

CHAPTER XII

THE WELSH PROVINCE (*continued*)

ii. MENEVIA

AFTER the see of Menevia had been vacant for over five years, under the administration of the Archbishop of Cardiff, it was the pleasure of the Holy See to fill it in the person of Canon Francis John Vaughan, rector of Barry Dock. Canon Vaughan, then forty-nine years of age, is the youngest son of the late Colonel F. B. Vaughan of Courtfield, and so a nephew of Cardinal Vaughan and the fifth bishop given to the Church by that family in three successive generations. He was educated at the Oratory School and went on to Ushaw and Saint-Sulpice, where he was enabled to complete his studies in spite of poor health and was ordained priest, at Ushaw, in 1903. His first parish was at Aberafon, then he was transferred to Porthcawl, and finally to Barry Dock in 1913, where he remained for thirteen years. While there he made a great reputation as a pastor and in public life generally, and served on the Cardiff board of guardians for seven years. In 1922 he was appointed a canon of the metropolitan chapter. There was in one respect a striking contrast between the two first Welsh bishops drawn from the secular clergy: Mgr. Mostyn at the time of his consecration was very young, with but ten years' experience of parochial work, and that in one place, outside Wales; Mgr. Vaughan was a man of

mature age, with a career of twenty years in three Glamorganshire parishes behind him.

The episcopal consecration of Canon Vaughan took place in St. David's cathedral at Cardiff on the feast of the Birthday of our Lady, September 8, 1926, and it was the first consecration of a bishop performed in Wales since the Reformation—and by the first Welsh archbishop; the co-consecrators were Mgr. Dunn of Nottingham and Mgr. Thorman of Hexham & Newcastle, and Mgr. Keily of Plymouth also was present. Consecrator and consecrated represented in themselves the two ancient Welsh Catholic families of Mostyn and Vaughan and not only the bishops of Wales in the middle ages but also those bishops of earlier and not less important days who had shepherded their flocks in Dyfed and Gwynedd and Gwent. It was an occasion of which the spiritual and historical significance could not be missed, and Dr. Richard Downey in the course of an eloquent sermon pointed proudly to this manifestation of the Catholic Church, "venerable with the homage of ages, yet living with energies unimpaired, in spite of persecution, spoliation, and obloquy."

And indeed the clergy gathered in the church formed a microcosm of the history of the Christian ministry to the souls and bodies of men: the company of secular clergy stood for the hidden, often unappreciated, day-to-day but age-long toil of the parish pastors; the Benedictine monks were a reminder of the great flowering of Christianity in the dark ages, when work was first recognized as holy and learning as sacred; the Franciscan friars represented the middle ages, and particularly the thirteenth, greatest of centuries, when the Catholic idea of Pope, Prince, and People had not yet been obscured by a vulgar and often

dishonest nationalism; the Jesuits stood for the counter-reformation which, if it did not undo all the work of Calvin and Luther, brought to the Church at least as much as she had lost, and in particular they brought to mind the martyrs Philip Evans and David Lewis; while the Passionists stood for the combination of the older asceticism with the newer public duties, and the Fathers of Charity for the principles of that grand figure Antonio Rosmini-Serbatì. The three bishops looked back to the Apostles themselves, and in Mgr. Mostyn the whole was summed up—the Metropolitan, the bearer of the Apostolic Pallium, the immediate representative of Pope Pius XI, and so of St. Peter and of the divine Founder and Head of the Christian Church himself. When the rite was over and the second Bishop of Menevia was enthroned before the altar, the crowded congregation looked upon a personification of sixteen hundred years of religious life and history; across the ages the Church in Britain of the fourth century recognized the Church in Wales of the twentieth.

At the time of Mgr. Mostyn's promotion to Cardiff there were 9880 Catholics in Menevia, served by 26 secular priests and about a dozen regulars, with 15 convents. During the time the see was vacant missions were established at *Hawarden* (1922) and *Portmadoc*. This place and its neighbour Tremadoc, at the north-east corner of Cardigan Bay, owe their existence to William Alexander Madocks, m.p., who built Portmadoc as a port for the slate-quarries of Ffestiniog early in the nineteenth century, at the same time that he reclaimed the Traeth Mawr from the sea by building a huge embankment across the estuary (Shelley was at Tremadoc in 1812-13 and expended both energy and

money in promoting Madocks's grandiose, and successful, undertaking). The priest of Pwllheli lived at Tremadoc for a time from 1893 onwards, and then the district depended on the former place until a temporary chapel was provided at Portmadoc about 1925. This was replaced by a very good little stone church in 1934, and given a resident priest.

In the eight years of Mgr. Vaughan's episcopate from the autumn of 1926 till the autumn of 1934 remarkable progress was made. The number of places in which Mass is offered every Sunday rose from 62 to 77; the number of secular priests over doubled, from 24 to 56*; 925 non-Catholics were received into the Church; where there was one contemplative convent there are now five; instead of only one parish with more than one resident priest there are ten. The increase in the number of secular clergy has enabled them to relieve the Society of Jesus of the parishes of Holywell and Llandrindod Wells (1930), Rhyl (1931), and Ruthin (1933), with their dependencies, and Saint Asaph's chapel-of-ease has been given a resident pastor.

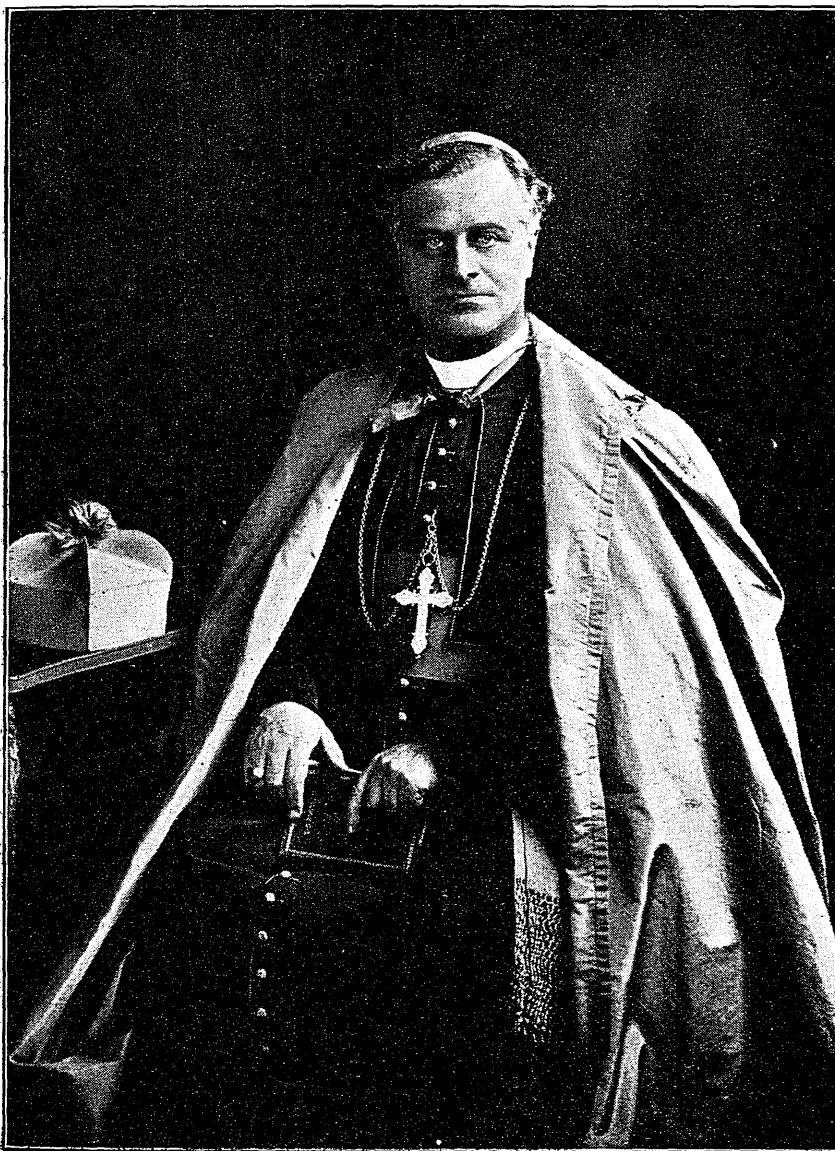
Mgr. Hook began to say Mass in a temporary chapel at *Machynlleth* from Aberystwyth in 1927 and became its first resident priest the next year. The Catholics in the town were so few that the emigration of two or three families reduced the congregation by half, but Mgr. Hook's successor extended his activities to *Aberdovey* (Aberdyfi), where Mass had been said years before in the holiday-house of the Jesuit students opposite the railway-station (later transferred to Barmouth). This centre is now to be moved to the neighbouring small holiday-resort of *Towyn*.

* These were mostly trained at Oscott, the Venerable and the Beda in Rome, and the English colleges at Valladolid and Lisbon.

At the same time *Tumble* in Carmarthenshire was made a Mass-centre, and a church was opened there in 1929, served from Burry Port. Three new missions were established in 1928: *Chirk*, where there is a permanent church, in the coalfield at *Llay*, which has a temporary chapel, and at *Llangollen*, where Mass is offered in summer only and in a hired hall. *Glascoed Hall* near Denbigh is served every Sunday from Llay. In 1929 a permanent church was opened at *Bagillt* in Flintshire, from whence is served *Mostyn*.

At the beginning of 1929 there was one Catholic church in the whole of the county of Merioneth, at Barmouth, where there was but a handful of resident Catholics.* To-day Mass is celebrated in three places every Sunday, in another every Saturday, and in a fourth occasionally, and this expansion has all been from one centre, which owes its existence to the planting of a Carmel with its chaplain at *Dolgelley*. Though the county town, Dolgelley is a quiet little place of some 2250 people, not much to look at but grandly situated in the valley of the Wnion beneath the towering ridge of Cader Idris. In the past it has been a centre of Welsh culture, many books have been printed there and many distinguished Welshmen called it home, and it is still a stronghold of Protestantism. Its effort to maintain a perhaps undeserved reputation for fanaticism at the time of the coming of the nuns and sudden appearance of other Catholics was commendably feeble; it was difficult to resist the friendly neighbourliness of the three successive priests, even if they were English (one was in fact a Maltese!), and

* There was only one man who could serve Mass, and he lived four miles from the church



MGR. FRANCIS J. VAUGHAN, D.D.
Second Bishop of Menevia. Elected 1926.

the penalty that overtook the leader of a gang of roughs who showed violence to the house of a prominent convert was to be himself converted within the year. Catholicism may not yet be "popular" in Dolgelley, but it is familiar and respected.

A charming small church was opened a few weeks after the convent, in July 1929, and by Easter of the next year the priest had two substantial converts and had discovered a dozen other Catholics, mostly Welsh Gypsies with a strong Irish strain in them. By Easter 1934 the congregation numbered 145, of whom 28 were converts (nearly a half of them pure Welsh); the other 117 represented the fruit of exploring the surrounding territory! Eighteen miles away at *Bala* 24 Catholics were found and Mass was offered there on January 1, 1932. This, however, was not the first time since the Reformation, for the Jesuit priest at Ruthin used sometimes to come there (and to Dolgelley too), but this ceased before 1875. Now the Dolgelley priest has a curate, and the 40 Catholics at Bala assist at Mass every Sunday in a hall under the very nose of the town's famous Calvinistic Methodist theological college. A site for a church has been acquired. A further 25 Catholics, mostly stray Irish, were found at *Maentwrog* in the north of the county and these get Mass on Saturday, while the same number of Irish and Italians are served occasionally in the very Welsh slate-quarrying town of *Blaenau Ffestiniog*, where the Breton Oblates tried in vain to get a foothold thirty years ago. Since 1934 these two places are served from Portmadoc. *Trawsfynydd* has a dozen stray Irish too, but Mass can be said there only when the artillery-camp is occupied in the summer.

Trawsfynydd was the home of Blessed John Roberts

(see p. 22), and the Congregation of Sacred Rites has authorized the Dolgelley church to celebrate the solemnity of his feast on the Sunday within the octave of the Assumption. In 1934 a relic of this martyr was solemnly translated to the church and enshrined in a reliquary given by Mgr. Joseph Thorman, Bishop of Hexham & Newcastle.

A glance at a map will show that the above five places are scattered over the whole of the western half of Merionethshire, in a solidly mountainous country. Comment on what has been done from Dolgelley in the past five years is simply superfluous.* The significant thing is that *nearly all the Catholics were there already*, lost, forgotten. How many are hidden away in the depths of Cardiganshire, Montgomeryshire, Radnor?

The next place to profit from the coming of a Carmel was *Cardigan* (Aberteifi). This town was served occasionally from Carmarthen from 1854 onwards, but it was not till the refugee Benedictines established themselves at Caermaria that a mission could be definitely begun, and it had to be abandoned when the monks left in 1921. It was revived nine years later, a small church and presbytery being built for the chaplain of the nuns at Bridell, who is also parish priest. For some years a convalescent-home for clergy was conducted at *Trefriw* in the Conwy valley, and upon its being given up in 1930 it was made the centre of a parish with a resident priest. This provided the occasion for reopening the mission founded at Llanrwst across the river by the Breton Father Trébaol, Mass

* At the beginning of the holy year that marked the nineteen-hundredth anniversary of our redemption the parish priest sent the public crier through the town to announce the opening of the jubilee. That's the way to do it!

being again offered every Sunday in the chapel of St. Tudwal since 1933.

The year 1934 saw very interesting developments. On August 2 the Archbishop of Cardiff, in the presence of the Bishop of Menevia and a gathering of over 1000 of the clergy and laity of all Wales, opened a chapel of our Lady and St. Nonn, mother of St. David, at Saint Davids. The chapel, a most fitting little building, the gift of Mr. G. C. H. Morgan Griffiths, Carmarthen, and his wife, stands near the edge of the lonely cliff overlooking St. Bride's Bay, and adjoining the traditional birthplace of David.* It is built of stones which were once the walls of a mediæval chapel on the same site (known as the White Well chapel) and it has a pre-Reformation piscina and holy-water stoup, from Caerforiog and Capel y Gwrhyd respectively. Just below is the inlet of Porth Clais, "the port of the community", and a mile to the north is the lonely diminutive city and great mediæval cathedral of Saint David† where once was the saint's monastery, known variously as Ty Ddewi (David's house), Vallis Rosina, Hodnant, and especially Mynyw, *i.e.* Menevia; while just across the peninsula is Whitesand Bay (Porth Mawr) where St. Patrick embarked for Ireland. The first Mass was celebrated in this sanctuary by Mgr. Vaughan, the present representative

* He was related to some of the chief princes and saints of Wales. His father Sant was the son of Ceredig, founder of Cardigan (Ceredigion), son of Cunedda Wledig, and his paternal grandmother was Meleri, one of the numerous daughters of Brychan Brycheiniog. Nonn (abbreviated from Nonnita) was a daughter of Cynyr, probably from Caer in Carmarthenshire.

† Out at sea to the west is a group of rocks called "the Bishop and his Clerks". Of these the sixteenth-century George Owen, quoted by the Pembroke historian Fenton, said "they preache deadly doctrine to their winter audience, such poor seafaring men as are forcyd thether by tempest; onlie in one thing they are to be commended, they keepe residence better than the rest of the canons of that see are wont to do."

of St. David, a sermon was preached by Mgr. Mostyn, and there was a procession to the holy well of St. Nonn. The nearest stations to this shrine are Haverfordwest ("sixteen miles, seventeen hills") and Mathry Road.

In earlier days at *Llandovery* (Llanymddyfri) a Mrs. Lanigan got permission from the headmaster of the elementary school to go there every day to give religious instruction to the Catholic children. Then for some years the place was served every other Sunday from Carmarthen, but upon the Carmelite nuns settling there in October 1934 it was made a separate parish; a permanent church was built upon land bought some time back, and the convent chaplain is parish priest.

In the same year a church was built at *Crickhowell* (Crughywel) in the Usk valley at the cost of a Welsh-American benefactress, Miss Gwendolen de Veaux Lewis; it is served from Brecon. Finally, there was opened in the autumn of 1934 a permanent church at *Abergele*, a resort on the Denbighshire coast, which had no church at all before and was in the parish of Rhyl; and, in the same neighbourhood, a domestic chapel in the residence of Mr. R. O. Wynne at *Garthewin*, Llanfairtalhaiarn. A semi-public domestic chapel was opened as well at Pentresaeson Hall, *Bwlchgwyn*, near Wrexham.

CHAPTER XIII

THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

IT is historically fitting, in a church that has had so glorious a galaxy of holy men and missionaries among the bishops, abbots, and other monks of the old British observance, that from 1688 till 1850 in the north and till 1921 in the south-east, Wales was uninterruptedly under the jurisdiction of prelates who were members of the religious orders (eight Benedictines, two Franciscan Recollects). And for this reason, as well as for the missionary and pastoral work done by monks, friars, and clerks regular, any account of the more recent progress of the Church in Wales must include some particulars of the local history and establishments of the chief religious orders connected with her post-reformation history* : were it not for the prayers and labours of religious the Church in Wales would be but a faint shadow of what it is to-day. And first in order of time comes the Society of Jesus.

THE JESUITS

One of the first Jesuits recorded in Wales was Father Robert Jones (*alias* Hay), who was born at Chirk (Castell y Waun) in 1564. In 1595 he was at Raglan, the seat of the Somersets, earls of Worcester

* The friars minor of St. Francis, who did so much in the past at Abergavenny and elsewhere through their Recollect family, are now represented by the Capuchins.

(the first earl had married the heiress of William Herbert, Earl of Huntingdon, *temp.* Henry VII, and so acquired Raglan, which for a time was the centre of the Society in Wales); he became superior of his order throughout England in 1609. The "nest of Jesuits" at Raglan* was finally broken up when Henry Somerset, fifth Earl and first Marquess of Worcester, surrendered the castle to the Roundhead General Fairfax and Colonel Morgan in 1646 after a siege of over six months, but meanwhile the famous "college" of St. Francis Xavier at the Cwm, Llanrothal, had been erected in 1622. This *cwm* (*i.e.* narrow dingle) was a most suitable retreat, not only on account of the faithfulness of the surrounding country but also because of its situation. This is abundantly clear even to-day. The Monmouth-Hereford road is now a good highway; three hundred years ago it was as bad as, and probably a good deal worse than, any other minor main road between market towns. The Cwm lies a mile and a quarter to the west of this road, in a lane which branches off at Welsh Newton. It is a rough and stony lane; it falls 300 feet in two miles, running diagonally down a breast; parts are steeply banked and hedged, and its surroundings are well wooded; and in something over three miles it comes to a dead-end at Llanrothal, down by the river Monnow. In winter it is still hardly more than a villainous track; in those days it was a dark dangerous bridlepath, leading nowhere but to a hamlet, a few farms, and the Jesuit-haunted Cwm.

This property was let on a lease in 1637 for "four score and nineteen years" to Father William Morgan,

* An eighty-four year old English priest, Thomas Neville, was murdered by pursuivants at Raglan in 1679.

s.j. (one of the Skenfrith Morgans), by Henry, Marquess of Worcester. It consisted of two houses some distance apart, the Lower Cwm on the lane being connected with the Upper Cwm (or "the Scenshall") by an underground passage, or so it appears. Of the buildings known to the missionaries little is now left beyond the cellars of the Lower Cwm and a traceried window.

Between its foundation and its end in 1679 the college at the Cwm served thirty-three known places in South Wales (its district included Herefordshire, Gloucestershire, and Somerset): in 1641-44 there were 27 priests and 2 coadjutor-brothers centred there, who made 154 conversions; in 1651 they administered 34 baptisms, made 155 reconciliations, and regained 15 lapsed Catholics; in 1676-77 there were six priests there—and the violent end was at hand. When the Titus Oates persecution began Parliament ordered the bishop of Hereford, Dr. Croft, to investigate affairs at "the Combe" in his diocese, who sent Captain Scudamore of Kentchurch on the errand. The half-dozen priests in residence, under the rectorship of Blessed David Lewis, had only just time to escape before Scudamore and his men arrived and sacked the place.* Father Charles Prichard and Father Ignatius Price died as the result of hardship endured in being hunted for months "from barn to barn, from cave to cave, from hog-sty to hog-sty, through woods and mountains" during the rigour of a border winter, and Blessed David Lewis was betrayed by an apostate and executed at Usk.

After the break-up of the Cwm the Society had no

* A full account may be read in Croft's official report (he was an apostate ex-Jesuit), printed in Foley's *Records S.J.*, Vol. IV, p. 462. Many of the books then seized are still in the library at Hereford cathedral.

permanent residence in south Wales and the southern marches, but sent regular itinerant missionaries at least from the second half of the eighteenth century.*

North Wales was separated from the south in 1670, the central residence being Holywell, where the Jesuits had been established since the end of the previous century. The great figure of these early days was Father John Bennett (*alias* Price, Floyd, and Baker), who was born at Bryn Canellan in Flintshire in 1548. Having adhered to Protestantism he was reconciled to the Church and ordained priest at Douay, and in 1580 he came on the mission in his native county. Two years later he was taken and tried at Holywell, where he defied his judges in Welsh with the famous words, "Behold my two hands against all the heretics of England!" After being cruelly tortured at Hawarden and Ludlow† he was exiled, and while abroad joined the Society of Jesus, to which he had formerly been hostile. He was back again in Wales in 1590 and was one of the original members of the college at the Cwm. Having got leave to go to London to minister to the plague-stricken, he himself fell a victim and died there in 1625, seventy-seven years old. He is accounted the father of the Jesuit missions both in north and south Wales.

When Holywell became a separate residence in 1670 its activities extended to the service of Powis Castle at Welshpool and Plowden Hall in Shropshire (still a

* There was a continuous succession of Jesuit priests at Hereford from early in the eighteenth century till 1858. The first of them, extraordinarily popular in the city, was brother and heir to the well-known twelfth Baron Dunboyne, one-time bishop of Cork.

† While on the rack and pestered by a minister he exclaimed, "Well, seeing that nothing will satisfy this babbling fellow but a loquacious dispute, I pray hoist him up on another rack, that from similar pulpits we may argue the matter on equal terms!"

Catholic centre), and among its outstanding priests was another Father William Morgan, of Flint. He escaped abroad in 1679 and four years later was appointed rector of the English College in Rome—in spite of being a Welshman!

Before the Oates scare the number of Jesuits at Holywell averaged six, afterwards for a time three, and they had an unbroken succession of priests in charge at the Old Star, its predecessors and successors, until the year 1930.

There was no other permanent representative of the Society in Wales from 1679 until 1848-49, when St. Beuno's College was established as a divinity-school for scholastics ("theologate") in the parish of Tremerechion near Saint Asaph. From here between 1853 and 1863 missions were started at Denbigh, Rhyl, Saint Asaph, and Ruthin, which were developed and served by the fathers until recent years. A familiar and ever-welcome figure in these places was Father Charles Raymond-Barker, who was born in Gloucestershire in 1859. After working in South Africa, Egypt, and Palestine he served missions in various parts of England and eventually at Denbigh, and was a military chaplain throughout the European war. Subsequently he became one of the staff of priests at Rhyl, and his appetite for work in a man of over seventy was amazing: his consuming passions were music and missionary work, and if he had seen a way to convert Wales by means of the tonic *sol-fa* he would have done it.

In 1880 the French Jesuits of the province of Lyons established St. David's College at Mold as a house of studies, in what had formerly been the jail; it was closed some sixteen years later. These fathers did valuable missionary work at Buckley and Ruthin. In

1926 the theologate was transferred to Heythrop in Oxfordshire and St. Beuno's became a residence for priests of the Society who are undergoing their tertian-ship or third year of probation, after ordination. It was at St. Beuno's in 1875 that Father Gerard Manley Hopkins began writing poetry again, with "The Wreck of the Deutschland", after a silence of seven years. A number of his poems were not only written there but display specifically Welsh inspiration and allusions, including an epigrammatic verse, in both Latin and English, on St. Winefride at Holywell. The poem "Penmaen Pool" was written at the Jesuit holiday-house at Barmouth in the summer of 1876.

The heroism and worth of the Jesuit missionaries in Wales has been generously recognized by Sir Owen Edwards, who had no love for their convictions: "Welsh Jesuits, educated at Rome, or St. Omer, or Valladolid, came back to Wales, and, while hunted from place to place with the sword hanging over their heads, they stole out in the dead of night to celebrate Mass or to strengthen the faith of their converts. Their learning, their self-sacrificing zeal, their real philanthropy, won the regard of the people among whom they laboured; but the steady merciless persecution, which sent Philip Evans to the gallows and the hangman's knife at Cardiff and David Lewis at Usk, exterminated the mission upon which so many devoted lives had been spent." "The Jesuits," he goes on, "had come too late. It was too late to arouse a national opposition to a Reformation which was a purely English movement. . . ."

THE BENEDICTINES

i. *The English Congregation.*

The notable part played by Welshmen in the preservation and renewal of the English Benedictine congregation has been already referred to, and Benedictine missionaries are found in Wales from time to time during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, such as Dom Anselm Turberville, a monk of Montserrat, who died in his native Glamorgan in 1645, Dom Charles Pugh, who was at Blackbrooke in Skenfrith and elsewhere between c. 1660 and 1689, Dom Richard Harris, of St. Edmund's monastery in Paris, who was at Clytha from 1769 to 1772, and Dom Bernard Young at Welshpool (d. 1801).^{*} But it was with the restoration of the hierarchy in 1850 that began that fruitful association of the English Benedictines with Wales, Glamorgan in particular, that has lasted unbrokenly (though in altered circumstances) to the present day.

In 1839 the superiors of the English Benedictines presented a petition to Pope Gregory XVI in which the attention of the Holy See was drawn to a most unusual feature, practically peculiar to England, in the local hierarchy during the middle ages, namely, that certain of the cathedrals were constituted with monastic chapters. At Canterbury, Winchester, Durham, Ely, Worcester, Norwich, and Rochester the cathedral was associated with a Benedictine monastery, of which the bishop was nominally abbot; actually it was ruled by a prior, who was abbot in everything but

^{*} Blessed Philip Powel (*alias* Morgan, h.d.q. Tyburn, 1646) came from Trallwng in Breconshire. After working for twenty-four years in the west of England he was on his way to Wales when he was denounced as a priest and arrested. His crucifix and other relics are at Downside.

name. The monks formed the diocesan chapter, served the cathedral church (which was also the priory church), and elected the bishop, who was not himself, however, necessarily or always a monk. These institutions were called cathedral priories and their monastic superiors cathedral priors ; in the dioceses of Coventry & Lichfield and Bath & Wells there were two chapters, one monastic and the other secular.* At the time of the above petition the erection of ordinary dioceses in England was being mooted. The petitioning monks gave it as their opinion that such a move was not then opportune, but asked, if the Holy See should judge differently and residential bishops be appointed, that the traditional connection of the Benedictines with the English hierarchy should be taken into consideration and the historical arrangement be in some way perpetuated. The petition was itself signed by the then titular cathedral priors.

When the hierarchy was in fact restored eleven years later no such provision was made. But the bishop of Newport, Mgr. T. J. Brown, was a Benedictine and was anxious to have a monastic chapter. He obtained the support of Cardinal Wiseman and the other bishops, and in 1852 the Congregation of Propaganda issued a decree that the diocesan chapter of Newport was to consist of monks of the English congregation, resident in that town. It was not found practicable at the time (or afterwards) to form the necessary establishment in

* The other cathedrals, including the four Welsh ones, were served by secular canons in the ordinary way, except Carlisle, which had a chapter of Augustinian canons regular. The cathedrals instituted by Henry VIII, Chester, Gloucester, and Peterborough, were also Benedictine. The succession to these cathedral priorates has been preserved among the English Benedictines by a series of titular prelates. Dom Hilary Willson, priest at Abergavenny from 1919 to 1924, is titular prior of Rochester.

Newport, but Mr. R. F. Wegg-Prosser came to the rescue and offered the church he was building on his Belmont estate at Clehonger, a few miles from Hereford, on condition that the monks should build the monastery.*

The suggestion was gratefully welcomed, the permission of the Holy See obtained, and after many difficulties the monastery was built and opened in 1859. The community was governed by a cathedral prior who, according to precedent, had all the duties, powers, and privileges of an abbot ; the use of *pontificalia* was accorded to him in 1891 at the request of the Bishop of Newport. A chapter of nine monastic canons with the prior as provost was erected (not without strong opposition from some of the secular clergy), five of whom were resident in the monastery and four served parishes in Glamorganshire. The choir dress of canons not being appropriate to monks, the use of the mediæval *almuce*† was revived, worn over the choir cowl or, when in attendance on the bishop, over the surplice and tunic. The priory church of St. Michael and All Angels became the pro-cathedral of Newport & Menevia. This church is one of the most satisfactory "gothic revival" churches in England, at any rate outside, and for fifty years, until the opening of Westminster cathedral, it had the distinction of being the only English cathedral in which the Divine Office was daily celebrated in choir.‡

* The church had previously been offered both to the Jesuits and to the Irish Lazarists.

† A hooded shoulder-cape with two pendants in front, trimmed with fur, originally to keep the head and neck warm.

‡ In a country where cathedral canons are necessarily non-resident it is often overlooked that this public celebration of the office is normally their first duty. At Westminster it is carried out by vicars, who form a college of cathedral chaplains, and for some years now the office has been recited in choir every day by the clergy attached to St. Barnabas's cathedral, Nottingham.

When in 1916 the diocese of Newport became the archdiocese of Cardiff the cathedral and canons of Belmont continued their function but, as we have seen, with the addition of another cathedral and another chapter as well—there was here an unintended reminiscence of Coventry & Lichfield, and Bath & Wells. But actually the double arrangement did not come into operation, for in the same year that the Cardiff secular chapter was erected the Belmont church ceased to be a cathedral and the monastic chapter was dissolved (by the bull *Præclara gesta*, 1920). This was a development that Mgr. Hedley had neither foreseen nor desired when he adumbrated his scheme for an archiepiscopal see at Cardiff (*cf.*, p. 148), and it was very strongly opposed by some of the English Benedictines; on the other hand, “some of the Benedictine Superiors—among them the highest—were not only willing but were eager to free the Congregation of this diocesan responsibility” (Wilson). From the point of view of history and tradition it is regrettable that there is no longer a monastic cathedral with its priory in England; but “those on whom rests the chief solicitude of these things” judged that the interests both of the archdiocese and of the order were best served by the suppression of Belmont as a cathedral—and, after all, the Catholic Church is not an archæological society.*

This event terminated the direct association of Belmont with Wales, but the missions of Glamorgan owe so much to the English Benedictine congregation that a few particulars of its monastic history are not

* The Holy See has promised that the close association of the Benedictines with the English hierarchy shall always be recognized by the presence of a monk among the bishops; the present bishop of Lancaster, Mgr. T. W. Pearson, is a monk of Downside.

out of place here. The first cathedral prior appointed was Dom Norbert Sweeney, who had been prior of Downside. He was followed by the second son of Colonel John Vaughan of Courtfield, Dom Bede, who filled the office from 1862 till 1872 when he was called to be coadjutor to the Archbishop of Sydney. It was at Belmont that he wrote his great work on the *Life and Labours of St. Thomas Aquinas*, and it was soon after he took up office that Dom John Cuthbert Hedley, recently ordained, was sent from Ampleforth to Belmont. Prior Wilfrid Raynal, greatly beloved by his subjects, is known to the outer world principally for his translation of the *Imitation of Christ*.

Originally Belmont had no community of its own, but was the common novitiate and house of studies for the whole English congregation, beginning with a dozen novices, a score of junior professed monks, and a professorial staff drawn from the various other monasteries. In 1901, at the instance of the late Abbot Butler and by resolution of the general chapter of the congregation, novices began to be received for Belmont itself and the priory began slowly to build up a community of its own, side by side with the novices and students from other houses who were being trained there. In 1917 the Belmont community obtained complete independence; the common novitiate and house of studies were discontinued and the other monasteries became each responsible for the training of its own novices according to normal Benedictine practice. Finally, when the cathedral priorate was abolished in 1920, the house was raised to the rank of an abbey and Dom Aelred Kindersley, who had been cathedral prior since 1915, was made the first abbot. Three years later a school for boys was opened, first

as an aluminate and later, in 1926, as a lay school, in accordance with the educational activities of the English Benedictine congregation.

The vicissitudes of Belmont have by no means meant the severance of Benedictine activities from South Wales, though several of their parishes have been given up to the secular clergy in recent years. Aberkenfig, Abergavenny, Bridgend, St. Mary's at Cardiff, Maesteg, and three churches at Swansea, with their dependencies, are still served by monks; of these parishes, Abergavenny and St. Mary's at Cardiff receive their priests from Ampleforth Abbey and the remainder from Douai Abbey, Woolhampton.

ii. *Caermaria.*

Among the monks dispossessed by the French association laws at the beginning of the present century were the Benedictines of Kerbeneat Abbey in the diocese of Quimper, whose expulsion was so sudden that they had no time to make any provision for themselves. They came to Wales, and were at first sheltered by Lord Ashburnham in his mansion at Pembrey, near Llanelly. They were then enabled to take a house near Llechryd, just out of Cardigan on the Carmarthen road, whither they moved in 1905; the new monastery was dedicated in honour of our Lady of Cardigan, and was called *Caermaria* ("Mary's stronghold").

The monks, who were Bretons, put themselves at the disposal of the Welsh bishops and were used a very great deal for "supply" work in all parts of Wales; early in 1914 Mgr. Hedley confided the new parish of Caerphilly entirely to their care and they served it till 1921. These Bretons got on exceedingly well with the

Welsh, who showed themselves very sympathetic towards their exiled kinsmen. A number of converts was received at Cardigan, including the owner and occupier of Cardigan Priory (a former cell of Chertsey), and it was due to this lady* that the monks were able to open a temporary chapel in Cardigan itself; at the evening service on Sundays instructions were sometimes given in Welsh, and these attracted a good deal of interest.

When war broke out in 1914 several members of the Caermaria community were called to the colours in France,† and Abbot Athanasius Avignon sent others of his monks to minister in French parishes that were left without priests. After the war they mostly returned to their old monastery in Brittany (Kerbeneat is about 15 miles from Brest, in the department of Finistère), with the tacit permission of the government, and the abbey is rapidly recovering its former prosperity.

The community at Caermaria definitely came to an end in 1921, and the mission in Cardigan was closed for nine years after.

iii. *Caldey.*

Three outstanding figures among the Welsh holy men of the fifth-sixth century were SS. Illtyd, Samson, and Dyfrig, any one of whom would have been as fit a person as Dewi Sant himself to be the patron of Wales, and all three were closely connected with Caldey, an island of some 500 acres in area a couple of miles off the coast of Tenby in Pembrokeshire. A monastery was founded on it somewhere around 475 by a certain

* The late Mrs. Emily Pritchard ("Olwen Powys"), authoress of *Cardigan Priory in the Olden Days*.

† The infidel chauvinist mind works like that. "We turned you out of your home because you were monks, but we expect, nay, compel you to come back and fight for the nation."

Piro, whence its name in Welsh, Ynys Byr. After his ordination Samson received the permission of his abbot, Illtyd, to leave Llantwit Major and retire to Caldey, where he was soon after appointed abbot at a council of the monks presided over by St. Dyfrig, who was wont to spend Lent on the island.* About 1115 one of William the Conqueror's knights, Robert fitz Martin, founded a priory at Saint Dogmaels, just across the Teify from Cardigan, for Benedictines of the Tironian reform dependent on the mother-house in Normandy. Three years later it was made an independent abbey, and among its endowments was Caldey, which thus remained monastic and became Benedictine. For the next four hundred years nothing is known of its history, except for an odd reference here and there to the priory on it. St. Dogmael's and Caldey were dissolved with the other lesser monasteries in 1536 and so after a thousand years monks ceased to inhabit the island: there is some reason to believe that the last prior was Dom Hugh Eynon—a good Welsh name.

In March 1537 the King leased and in 1544 sold to John Bradshaw of Presteign (*inter alia*) "all that our manor of Caldey with its rights members and appurtenances". By 1612 the inhabitants of the island numbered only eight or ten households (there had been thirty under the monks at the end of the fifteenth century), and the Bradshaws† sold it to Walter Philpin, mayor of Tenby. It was again sold, in 1653, to Reeve

* He surrendered the office after eighteen months and eventually died, c. 560, at Dol in Brittany, where he was bishop. He was afterwards popularly supposed to have been archbishop of this place, and from this a wild story was worked up in the twelfth century in support of the metropolitan claims of Saint Davids. Mr. Christopher Dawson attaches great importance to the influence of Caldey at this time: see his *Making of Europe*, pp. 197-8.

† The wife of the then John Bradshaw, "Sibell", was a Catholic, named as recusant in a Hereford diocesan list, 1604.

Williams of Llanrhydian, in 1786 to George Greville, Earl Brooke and Earl of Warwick, and in 1798 to Thomas Kynaston of Pembroke. He built a small manor-house on to the priory buildings. After passing through other hands it was bought by a clergyman of the Church of England, the Rev. W. Done Bushell, and in 1906 was acquired from him by a community of Anglican monks living under the Rule of St. Benedict.*

This community was founded in London in 1895 by a young medical student, Benjamin Fearnley (in religion Aelred) Carlyle, and, after residing in several places, had at the invitation of Mr. Bushell lived for fifteen months in Caldey priory, from January 1901. Having too many members for such accommodation they left for Painsthorpe in Yorkshire, but were subsequently enabled to buy Caldey and took possession on St. Luke's day 1906. Thereon followed steady growth in numbers and fervour of observance, a new monastery was built, and the island put under proper cultivation once more.

In February 1913, after a long correspondence with the Anglican authorities and a year of study, prayer, and reflection, the community decided that they could no longer conscientiously remain members of the Church of England. This is not the place for a discussion of the controversies that followed, but it may be useful again to put certain figures on record. At the time when submission to the Holy See was decided upon the community consisted of thirty-three members all told. Of the nine solemnly professed brethren only one did not sign the letter to the Anglican Bishop of

* Early in the twentieth century both Carthusians and Cistercians, expelled from France, examined Caldey as a possible home.

Oxford announcing the decision; he returned to secular life and subsequently became a Catholic. Of the thirteen simply professed brethren two did not sign, but neither of them wished to continue in monastic life. Of the five novices two did not sign; one became a Catholic later and the other had no desire to remain a monk. Of the six oblates two were excluded from the deliberations for personal reasons; of the remainder, one did not sign. It will thus be seen that of thirty-one effective members of the community six only dissented from the decision of their brethren and two of these subsequently agreed.* At the same time the Anglican nuns of St. Bride's, Milford Haven, independently decided to ask to be received into the Catholic Church (see p. 204). Help was asked from Dom Bede Camm, as a Benedictine and a convert, who came to Caldey at once and on February 28 celebrated the first Mass on the island since the Reformation. A week later Mgr. Mostyn, as ordinary, received the community into communion with the Holy See in the presence of the Benedictine abbots of Downside, Maredsous, and Caermaria, and shortly after Aelred Carlyle went to Rome to pay his homage to the Pope. Pius X received him with great kindness, recognized him as founder of the Caldey community, and sent him to Maredsous Abbey in Belgium to do his canonical novitiate and prepare for the priesthood. The Pope made use of memorable words on this occasion: "We accord the most ample faculties", he said, "and all, *all* dispensations, in order that he may be ordained

* The community of Anglican Benedictines now established at Nashdom in Buckinghamshire has no organic continuity with the Caldey Benedictines. Their founder and abbot was the dissentient *oblate* referred to above and therefore strictly speaking was not a monk of Caldey at all.

immediately after his novitiate ; and not only for him but also for those others at Caldey, *for they have not need to be very learned in order to praise God*". Meanwhile the Bishop of Menevia had been given jurisdiction over the community for ten years, they had been clothed as novices, and Dom John Chapman of Maredsous had been appointed superior *pro tem.** The *conventus* of Caldey was now a canonically erected Benedictine monastery and eighteen months later Father Aelred Carlyle was solemnly blessed and installed as abbot by Mgr. Mostyn, assisted by the abbots of Downside, Maredsous, and Farnborough, DD. Cuthbert Butler, Columba Marmion, and Fernand Cabrol.

During the fifteen years of Caldey's second Benedictine period it had considerable significance for the Church in Wales whose former contemplative life it had revived. Though most of the monks were English they were keenly conscious of the Welsh traditions centred in their island. Welsh antiquarians and ecclesiologists were warmly welcomed there, and the pages of their review *Pax* were always open to such contributors, whether Catholics or not, as Mgr. Hook, Henry Jenner, D. Rhys Phillips, A. L. Leach, and Father John Murphy, s.j. A number of valuable articles of Welsh interest was published therein. The abbey was dedicated in honour of St. Samson and, the old dedications being unknown, the two ancient churches were named after St. Illtyd and St. David respectively ; moreover, the Congregation of Sacred Rites authorized the observance of the feasts of SS.

* An interesting and significant concession of the Holy See was that monks could be professed for the choir without intending to proceed to holy orders. This was a reversion to earlier monastic practice, and a privilege shared by only one other Benedictine monastery.

Paul Aurelianus, Gildas, and Maglorius (Meyler) in addition to other local saints already allowed to Wales. In 1919, owing to the good offices of the Cistercian Abbot of Melleriaie and the generosity of the Archpriest of Dol, a relic of St. Samson was translated from the former cathedral of Dol to his old home, where it was solemnly enshrined above the high altar of the abbey church.

From the time of their conversion the Caldey monks had to wrestle with material cares. Abbot Aelred had declared to the Archbishop of Canterbury that they could not think of transferring Anglican property against the will of the donors, and when the monks left the Church of England some benefactors, very naturally, "wanted their money back". The majority, with great generosity, made no claims, thereby demonstrating their Catholic-spiritedness. A committee, consisting of two Catholic and two Anglican members with a neutral chairman, went into the matter and unanimously agreed on an equitable arrangement which made the monks liable to repay the sum of £3,000. At the same time all their former sources of revenue had of course dried up at their conversion, and soon after the Great War began. After directing his community and coping with its difficulties with ceaseless and untiring energy for eight years Abbot Aelred resigned his office in 1922; being succeeded as acting superior by the prior, Dom Wilfrid Upson; in 1926 the Abbot of St. Augustine's, Ramsgate, was appointed administrator apostolic of the abbey, whose affairs continued to be very difficult. Meanwhile a new home had been offered by the late Thomas Dyer-Edwardes at Prinknash Park (formerly a manor of St. Peter's Abbey in Gloucester) and permission was given to

move thither if a religious community could be found to take over Caldey. At the wish of the Holy See and by the good offices of the Cistercian abbot general, the late Dom John-Baptist Ollitrault de Keryvallan, an old friend of the Caldey Benedictines, the Cistercians agreed to buy the island and monastery of Caldey. Accordingly at the end of 1928 the Benedictines migrated to Prinknash, where Dom Benedict Steuart was appointed conventual prior with ordinary jurisdiction and the community, hitherto unattached, became a member of the English province of the Cassinese congregation of primitive observance in 1933.

The conversion of the Caldey monks in 1913 was the occasion of another Welsh property of some historical and quasi-monastic interest coming into Catholic hands. This was the monastery built by the Anglican Father Ignatius (Lyne) at Capel y Ffin, near Llanthony in the valley of Ewyras, on the borders of Brecon and Monmouth counties north of Abergavenny. Shortly after the death of Ignatius in 1908 the right at law to this place was declared by the High Court to belong to one who was now a Caldey monk, and on July 13, 1913, Mass was celebrated there for the first time by a Catholic priest. The house was eventually sold to a lay purchaser, a Catholic, and Mass is sometimes said in the chapel when the house is in occupation—a veritable outpost of the Faith among the glories of the Black Mountains, where the attitude of the Protestant peasants of to-day towards the “outsiders” is very different from that of their Catholic ancestors towards the Norman canons five miles down the valley in the twelfth century.*

* For further particulars I venture to refer the reader to my *Father Ignatius of Llanthony* (Cassell, 1931). There were hereditary Catholics in this valley at the beginning of the nineteenth century: cf., p. 24.

THE CISTERCIANS

Since it was necessary that the Benedictines should give up the island sanctuary which they had brought back to the Church, nothing could be more appropriate and satisfactory than that it should be taken over by the order whose abbeys had meant so much to Wales during the middle ages. The first *crefyddwr gwyn* to take up his residence in Wales since the dissolution was Dom Corentin Guyader, prior of the Breton abbey of Thymadeuc, who came to Caldey with another priest and a lay-brother from the same monastery in November 1925 (Father Corentin is now abbot of Melleraië). These three co-operated with the Benedictines in the administration of the island till it was vacated in 1928, when the Cistercians definitively took over and peopled the house with monks from the abbey of Chimay in Belgium. The new house was granted its autonomy as a conventual priory in 1934, when Dom Aelred Lefèvre was elected the first prior. Already the community has three subjects from Wales and it is hoped to have many more : the Cistercians brought about a renaissance of Welsh Christianity in the past, they may do so again in the future.

Only Holywell itself can vie with Caldey among Welsh Catholic centres to-day for historical interest and sacredness. The ancient privileges of the island, "whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary", of being extra-diocesan and extra-parochial are still preserved, both in spiritual and civil affairs : it belongs to no county, there is no magisterial jurisdiction, and it is not rated ; and it is a place of great physical attraction. One result of the conversion of its former owners was to bring back to Catholic worship

two old churches, the priory church (not to be confused with the church of the modern monastery) and the village or "parish" church. These are not by any means the only pre-reformation churches thus to be restored to their original use, but the date of their first foundation as places of worship is far earlier than that of any other Catholic church in Great Britain.

Of actual Keltic building there are no certain remains (though there may be some incorporated in the foundations of the village church). But there can be no reasonable doubt that the small mediæval priory building and church (of such plain workmanship that it is difficult to assign dates) occupy the site of the *clas* of St. Samson's days, for they adjoin the spring which has supplied water to the island uninterruptedly for fifteen hundred years at least, and on their south side is a very ancient burial-ground in which an unquestionably British monument has been found, namely, a stone with two inscriptions, in Ogam and in debased Roman lettering.*

THE CAPUCHINS

Pantasaph is a small village in the hills three miles west of Holywell, in a district sacred to the memory of the sixth-century St. Asaph: its own name means "Asaph's hollow", close by is Llanasa, the site of his chief monastery, and between them his holy well,

* The Ogam inscription is much mutilated but what remains was deciphered by Sir John Rhys as *Magl Dubr*, the elements of a name which literally means "the tonsured servant of Dubricius", and so may connect the stone with St. Dyfrig himself. The Latin words, assigned variously to the early sixth, seventh, and ninth centuries, were read by Rhys as *Et signo crucis in illam fingsi rogo omnibus ammulantibus ibi exorent pro anima Catuoconi*, which he translated, "And I have provided it with a cross; I ask all who walk in this place to pray for the soul of Cadwgan". Professor Burkitt thought he found Illtyd's name in the inscription, but his version has not been received with much favour by palæographers.

Ffynnon Asa. To the west is the mediæval cathedral city of Saint Asaph and four miles south is Caerwys, the scene of famous *eisteddfodau* in 1523 and 1568.

A hundred years ago Pantasaph was a miserable hamlet of half a dozen cottages and an inn,* its bare hill scarred with quarries and lead-mines. In 1846 it came into the hands of Viscount Feilding (later the eighth Earl of Denbigh) by his marriage with Louisa, heiress of David Pennant of Downing, and, as the nearest church was two miles away, the newly-married pair decided to build a church for their tenants on the spot. The foundation stone was laid in 1849, and Archdeacon Henry Edward Manning preached on that occasion. Two years later (and a year before Manning) Lord and Lady Feilding were received into the Catholic Church at Edinburgh, and they decided that the unfinished church at Pantasaph should follow them. This precipitated a somewhat bitter controversy with the Anglican Bishop of Saint Asaph, which involved litigation. Judgement was given in favour of Lord Feilding, and on appeal it was upheld by the House of Lords, whereupon a public subscription was raised and Protestant churches built at Gorsedd and Brynford with the proceeds. Meanwhile Augustus Welby Pugin was called in to finish the church and furnish it in conformity with Catholic requirements; it is hardly necessary to say that he provided it with a rood-screen and that the screen was subsequently removed.

While in Italy the Feildings had observed the life and work of the Capuchins, and it appeared to them

* The chronic "innlessness" of many parts of rural Wales (and what there are shut all day Sunday) is quite a recent development of local Nonconformity, a by-product of the religious "revivals" (*diwygiadau*). Within living memory it was part of the courtesy due to a visiting preacher to give him beer with his meals.

that the simplicity and austerity of the Franciscan rule and their Umbrian traditions made them very suitable to undertake the hard life of a mission in the wilds of north Wales. The Capuchin* Friars Minor form one of the three autonomous branches of the Franciscan Order, arising from a reform initiated by Blessed Matthew da Bascio in 1525. During the second half of the sixteenth century they received many recruits from among the refugees from the British Isles on the continent and a Welshman, Father Archangel of Pembroke, was guardian of their friary in Paris. Capuchin friars were at work in England from 1599 until the French Revolution broke up their novitiate and houses in France and Flanders. In 1851 Father Louis of Lavagna, destined for Canada, came to London to learn English and during the time he spent there re-established his order at Peckham with a cosmopolitan band of Italian, Dutch, Belgian and Tirolese friars. When, therefore, Viscount Feilding heard of this struggling settlement in London, he offered the Pantasaph church, together with some land, to Father Louis. He had the encouragement of Mgr. Brown of Shrewsbury, and Mgr. Grant of Southwark induced the hesitating friars to accept the offer. Father Louis and three other priests arrived at Pantasaph on October 25, 1852, and were joined by another priest and a lay-brother in the following January.

At first the friars lodged in the rectory-house (now the guest-house), and for some years their progress was slow, partly owing to difficulties consequent upon divided jurisdictions, Italian and Netherlandish, then in force over the Capuchins of Great Britain. Another

* This name is generally referred to *capuccio*, their distinguishing long pointed hood, but some derive it from the colloquial Italian *scappuccini*, hermits.

difficulty was about the friary buildings, which were eventually begun by Father Seraphin of Bruges in 1858. Lord Denbigh wished them to be carried out in accordance with the model set by the existing church and rectory-house, to which the friars objected that they would then lack the simplicity and plainness required by Franciscan tradition and the Capuchin constitutions. At one time it looked as if this difference would cause the friars to give up Pantasaph, but happily it was at length composed by a compromise : the new buildings should match the others outside, but inside they should conform to Capuchin requirements. Alms were begged for the purpose in England, Belgium, and Holland, and they were formally opened on the feast of St. Francis, October 4, 1865 ; in the following year Pantasaph was constituted the novitiate for the Capuchin Order in Great Britain. By 1899 it had become necessary to add a new wing, so that the whole of the upper part of the monastery could be assigned to the novices.

The coming of the friars has changed the face of Pantasaph, spiritually and materially. Land has been cleared and brought under cultivation, gardens and avenues laid out, and in particular the bare mountain-side on the north clothed with pine-trees. A place that eighty-five years ago was unheard of twenty miles away is now the resort of hundreds of pilgrims every year, especially from Lancashire, who come to make a retreat or to follow the way of the cross which, in accordance with the earlier form of that devotion, consists of a series of stations in the open air : in this case, small chapels at intervals of about 100 yards up a steep winding path, with the larger chapel of the sepulchre and a great bronze calvary-group at the top. In the church, consecrated to God in honour of

St. David by Mgr. (afterwards Cardinal) Ignatius Persico, o.s.f.c., are enshrined the relics of a Roman martyr, St. Primitivus, sent by Pope Pius IX from the Cemetery of Praetextatus to Lord Denbigh. Pantasaph is the mother-house and novitiate of the English Cupuchin province and a house of studies for friars who are to be priests.

Apart from difficulties already indicated, these things have not been achieved without contending. In spite of the generosity of the Denbighs and of friends in Liverpool who "quested" for the friars, the community in its early days was often short of the necessary minimum for material needs, and more than once the Capuchin authorities were on the point of ordering them to withdraw from the place. That they did not do so was principally due to the energy and faith of Father Seraphin (d. at Cork, 1887) and to the first bishop of Shrewbury, Mgr. Brown, who lies buried in the friars' graveyard. And well it was for Catholics in Wales that they did not withdraw, for from Pantasaph friars went out to establish missions along the north coast and in the coal-fields of the south (see pp. 89 and 100). Since 1908 they have had a small friary, at Penmaenmawr, and they serve the church at Llanfairfechan.

It was Father Seraphin who brought a community of the Sisters of Charity of our Lady of Mercy to Pantasaph from Tilburg in Holland to take charge of the orphanage he projected. They had a hostile reception from the people of the place and even Mgr. Brown and Lord Denbigh were more than doubtful if they would be a success. That they were is startlingly shown by the great block of buildings that now confronts the friary—convent, secondary school,* day school, and poor-law

* Now moved to Orpington, in Kent.

school, all sprung from the derelict inn in which the sisters first lived.

The name of Pantasaph is known to many non-Catholics because of its associations with Francis Thompson and Coventry Patmore. Thompson first went there in 1892, staying at a house near the monastery gates, from whence he wrote in a letter, "Lord, it is good for me to be here, very good." Patmore (a Franciscan tertiary) joined him in 1894, and the two spent much time walking and talking upon the neighbouring mountains. The association with Patmore had a good deal of influence on Thompson, and both were strongly affected by that distinguished Capuchin, Father Anselm (Kenealy), afterwards archbishop of Simla. The evenings when the two poets sat and discussed religion, life, and literature with Father Anselm and the other friars, "bearded counsellors of God", as Thompson called them, must have been curiously reminiscent of the days when such collocations of bard and Franciscan were common in Wales. It was at Pantasaph that Thompson met the village girl Maggie Bryan, who was the occasion of the allegorical sequence called "A Narrow Vessel", and before the crib in the church at Christmas 1895 he wrote "Ex Ore Infantium", first published in *Franciscan Annals*.

THE WHITE SISTERS

It is not invidious to single out for special mention the Sisters of the Holy Ghost (*Sœurs blanches*) from among the score of congregations of active unenclosed religious women with convents in Wales, for they are quite unknown in England; for the same reason some details of their origin and general history may be of interest.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century there lived at L  gu  , close by Saint-Brieuc in Brittany, a widow named Marie Balaven. She devoted the whole of her time and money to the care of the poor, the sick, and the children of her village, having as companion and help a woman called Ren  e Burel. They attracted the notice of a parish priest, Mgr. de la Ville Angeuin, who, with the approval of the Bishop of Saint-Brieuc, drew up a rule of life for them, clothed them with the religious habit, and employed them in his parish. This was in 1706. The two women were soon joined by others, and they were known as the Sisters of the Holy Ghost.

In 1729 the small community moved from L  gu   to Pl  rin, and from thence four years later they made their second foundation, at Saint-Herblon in the diocese of Rennes, where Marie Allenou de Grandchamp was appointed superioress, the Marquis de Ternulier de Fr  mont being their benefactor. The sisters were devoted to all kinds of charitable works, but especially to the education of young children. After eighty years of existence they had eighteen houses and 117 professed members, all in Brittany, but these were mostly swept away in the t  mpest of the French revolution. The mother-house at Pl  rin, however, was saved owing to the efforts of a M. Roussel Vilhellio, and at Saint-Herblon and Saint-Pol-de-L  on the sisters were not dispersed because of their usefulness in nursing wounded soldiers. After 1800 the congregation made a quick recovery, and its progress was accelerated in 1827 by the appointment of the Abb   le M  e, vicar general of Saint-Brieuc, to be its superior general. He transferred the mother-house from Pl  rin to more commodious premises which he had built in

the rue des Capucins at Saint-Brieuc. Furthermore, he revised the constitutions of the sisters and obtained confirmation of their status as a diocesan congregation, and upon election to the see of Saint-Brieuc continued to act as its superior general, an office belonging to subsequent bishops *ex officio*. Six of the White Sisters lost their lives in the Franco-Prussian war while nursing wounded troops.

In 1880 the congregation had 1332 members in 280 convents, and among other works educated 32,000 orphans and poor children without charge. Twenty-two years later practically every one of their houses was closed—they were among the thousands of “unprofitable subjects of the State” repudiated and scattered by the French law against religious associations in 1902.

Large numbers of the White Sisters migrated and took up their good works again in Belgium and the United States (diocese of Hartford). Others came from Brittany to Britain, to put themselves at the disposal of their Welsh kinsfolk. Here they have five convents: St. Michael's at Abergavenny, St. Alban's at Pontypool, St. Padarn's at Aberystwyth, St. David's at Brecon, and St. Winefride's at Carmarthen (other establishments, at Monmouth, Pwllheli, Caernarfon, and Tenby, have for one reason or another been given up). In all these places they conduct schools, which are much esteemed by Protestants as well as by Catholics; their most becoming black and white habit is a familiar sight in the streets* and a continual reminder of the religious tie that ought to bind the Welsh to the Bretons.

* When they were first seen at Brecon some people fled in terror: apparently they thought quite seriously that the term “Ghost” in the nuns' title had some spiritistic rather than spiritual significance! Such fantastic ideas are not so rare as might be supposed.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CONTEMPLATIVE NUNS

IN his pastoral letter to the diocese of Menevia at the Advent of 1929 Mgr. Vaughan wrote upon the contemplative life, and I cannot do better than reproduce his admirable words here :

“ We could not possibly extend God’s Kingdom and build up solid religious knowledge in the minds of our children without the great active and teaching orders. We thank God they are in our midst. But so often we are asked by the unthinking many : Of what use are those orders which do no active work ? The spiritual ignorance which underlies this question is great, and it is a sign of a mind that has lost its sense of the true values of the Christian life.

To devote our whole purpose and energy exclusively to active work and to speak of it as if it were the only thing of any moment is directly to contradict our Blessed Lord’s teaching about divine providence. ‘ Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his justice ’ (Luke xii, 31) was his oft-repeated teaching, and as for the rest, are we not in the hands of a God who delights to be called ‘ our Father ’ and who knows our needs even better than we ourselves ? In a moment he can come to our assistance and will so come if we put first things first : the Kingdom of God and his justice, our sanctification and personal holiness. ‘ Be not solicitous for your life, what you shall eat, nor for your body what you shall put

on. . . . For all these things do the nations of the world seek. But your Father knoweth that you have need of these things, but seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his justice : and all these things shall be added unto you ' (Luke xii, 22 and 30, 31). We cannot meditate too often on this aspect of our Lord's teaching. It will help us to keep a true perspective in our religious life, both social and personal.

Outside the walls of the City of God, which is the One Holy Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church, there is a widespread tendency to regard Christianity as a system merely of doing good to our neighbours. It is not simply this, but the doing of good to them out of the abundance of our love for Almighty God : to love him must come first. Christianity is not the religion of men but the religion first of the love of God, and then of all in so far as it springs from the first love. Catholics have ever been ardent lovers of their brethren and prolific inventors of schemes for their welfare because they of all men had a motive powerful enough to encourage them even in the most adverse circumstances.

That motive was the love of God who in turn loves men. Let us not forget it : the common brotherhood of men cannot be maintained on any basis other than the common Fatherhood of God. Remove the old Christian motive for brotherly love, and selfishness such as marked the pagan world of old must again prevail. It is impossible to love men truly and for long merely for their own sakes, and so a ' Christianity ' of mere natural affection cannot endure. The second commandment, no matter how much it may be like the first, cannot replace it. Our Lord has told us what that is : ' Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind and with thy whole strength.' The

second commandment cannot be observed if the first is neglected, for it has no incentive in itself : ' and the second is like to it : thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself ' (Mark xii, 30, 31).

The contemplative orders are the Catholic Church's step towards the literal observance of the first commandment. For whilst the majority of the faithful are called upon to observe the first commandment as a guiding principle amid the variety of their activities, there are others whom God calls to observe it as a way of life, full and complete in itself, and them he makes capable of their vocation by his grace. From them he expects not an abundance of activity seasoned with love of himself, not a portion of their time and energy, but the whole of their life and all their activities for his own service and praise. Privileged souls are they to spend their days in prayer and close communion with him.

We must not think of those who embrace the contemplative life as selfish, intent merely on their own salvation. In the Church every form of activity is used by Jesus Christ not merely for the benefit of the individual who performs it but also for the general good of us all. The doctrine of the communion of the saints, in so far as it refers to us on earth, means that the salvation of each is worked out not on an individualistic basis but as a part of the bigger scheme of the salvation of the whole mystical body of Christ, which is the Church. We are saved not as individuals but as members of that mystical body which our Lord has fashioned for himself. The activities of each individual benefit not only himself but also the other members of the Church. For we are a living body with Jesus Christ as our head and his life is communicated to each, and there is a vital connection between all of us who are his members. The health and vigour of one part of

Christ's mystical body are felt in other parts and react upon them. The great God, who knows the purpose for which he is working, shapes our lives and apportions our tasks in such a way as to make us of benefit to our brethren and them of benefit to us. He has different vocations to give to the many varieties of character which are found amongst us. The burden of each is fixed in justice, and even more in mercy. No one has more to do than is just, and no one labours for himself alone, but for the whole Church. To some he gives poverty to bear as their vocation, to others many sufferings or a life of hard work, bodily or mental, or the call to a life of prayer ; and in many we see how humble submission to the will of God coupled with diligent use of whatever talents he has given is the key-note of a Christian life. What comfort those who suffer should find in the thought that God is allowing them the privilege of helping into Heaven those souls who are perhaps too weak to bear much suffering.

This was the constant teaching of Saint Paul, who says in his epistle to the Ephesians (iv. 12) that all gifts are given to the faithful for the building up of the mystic body of Christ. He develops this doctrine with sublime clarity and power in the first epistle to the Corinthians (xii) wherein he concludes (xiii) that the greatest thing on earth is the observance of the first commandment, to love God above all things. For the loving service of God is the only thing we do on earth which we shall do for ever in Heaven.

They then who are called exclusively to a life of prayer are called to it for our benefit and for their own. They make up for our deficiency in prayer just as Saint Paul says that he filled up in his own body ' those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ . . . for his body which is the Church ' (Col.

i, 24). There is nothing wanting in the passion of Christ in itself for his work was in itself perfectly finished and consummated, as he announced from the cross with his dying breath ; but Christ's mystic body must be conformed and assimilated to his real body by the sufferings, prayers and activities of the members of the Church until the day when, in Heaven, he shall make it like 'the body of his glory' (Philipp. iii, 21).

We can judge the relative importance of the various vocations in the Church only by our Lord's standards. What he was his Church must be. What he considered the first things and showed to be the first in his own life by the way he acted, those must be the first in importance in the Church and in our own lives. When we consider that our Lord spent thirty years of his life in preparation for his short three years of public ministry can we doubt for one moment about the importance of the contemplative life ? Before he taught his people and called his apostles, did he not spend forty days in prayer, forty days out of the short span of three years ? If we take these and his other actions in conjunction with his teaching we shall learn that valuable lesson that what is not fructified by prayer never grows. All our efforts for the conversion of Wales will fail unless we are supported and assisted by many who pray.

For these reasons we welcome the contemplative orders amongst us as power-houses, sending along to us a stream of life, courage, and strength. They will fructify our labours and bring down upon us the abundant blessings of Almighty God, and if we on our part assimilate our lives so far as we can to the model given us by Jesus Christ, and copied in the plan of the contemplative orders, we shall receive a hundred times greater harvest in return for our labours."

At the time the Bishop wrote this pastoral there were four convents of contemplative nuns in his diocese (there are now five*), of which only one had been there when he was appointed to the see three years before.

THE BENEDICTINE DAMES

Although, as is said elsewhere, there were Poor Clares at Bullingham in Herefordshire from 1880, Wales proper owes its first monastery of strictly contemplative women (as of men) in modern times to the grace of God working among members of the Church of England. In 1868 Miss Hilda Stewart, with the help of Father Ignatius of Llanthony, founded at Feltham in Middlesex a community that aimed at living according to the Rule of St. Benedict. Ignatius "directed the nuns with a heavy hand, exacting from them unconditional obedience, and announcing himself to be 'a divinely appointed and inspired apostle of Jesus Christ'. Having endured this for ten years, the community threw off his yoke, after some rather melodramatic scenes, and carried on a much more peaceful existence independently, with Mother Hilda still as their superior." In 1889 they went to Twickenham,† then in 1893 to Malling Abbey in Kent, and in 1911 to St. Bride's at Milford Haven in Dyfed. Here, under the guidance of their abbess, Scholastica Ewart, and in touch with their brethren at Caldey, the nuns began seriously to consider (not for the first time) the claims of Rome on their allegiance.

On a day within the octave of St. Scholastica in

* There were apparently only three monasteries of women all told in Wales before the Reformation.

† At this time one of their best friends was a young clergyman, Mr. Reginald Camm—later Dom Bede Camm, o.s.b.

1913 a French Benedictine visited the town, went into the nuns' chapel, and called at the convent. He spoke with the Abbess at the *grille*, and told her that "As I went into the church the sisters were singing 'Egre-dere modo, frater : egredere si potes', as if they were addressing me. It is all very strange." "Yes", she replied, "it is, *very* strange". A few days later, on February 18 (the day before the Caldey monks made their decision), the professed nuns of St. Bride's resolved to submit themselves to the Holy See ; there were only four dissentients, of whom two became Catholics shortly after. On *Laetare* Sunday, March 2, the first Mass was sung by Abbot Avignon of Caermaria, and on the 7th the Bishop of Menevia received thirty-one members of the community and three lay people into the Church.* Some weeks later the monastery was canonically erected, under the jurisdiction of the Bishop for ten years, the sisters began their novitiate, and the prioress and another nun from Stanbrook Abbey were put in charge of them. Dame Scholastica was blessed and installed as abbess in the summer of 1914.

The nuns of St. Bride's were only tenants of their house, and in 1919 it was sold over their heads. Their position was desperate, when they were enabled to buy Talacre in Flintshire, the birthplace of Mgr. Mostyn and the home of his family since the fifteenth century. They moved to there, and in 1921 the Abbess and Convent of Talacre petitioned the general chapter of the English Benedictines to receive them into their congregation ; the request was granted, and the nuns

* It was on this occasion, I believe, that the *Church Times* referred to Mgr. Mostyn as a bishop *in partibus*—as though Menevia were in North Africa or Arabia.

were transferred from the jurisdiction of Mgr. Mostyn to that of the Abbot President of the English Congregation.

On April 1, 1927, took place the death of that very remarkable woman Dame Scholastica Ewart, at the age of 75—for sixteen years she had had shocking health and had been almost bed-ridden. The Anglican dignitary Canon Knox-Little said of her that she was “the cleverest woman with the strongest will” he had ever known, and the generosity of her spirit, her courage, and her firmness were not only the making of her community but effective for all who came into contact with her. The nuns elected to succeed her Dame Flavia Garland, who lacked the canonical age for appointment to so responsible an office and had accordingly to receive a dispensation for its exercise.

The community of Talacre, which now numbers nearly fifty members, is devoted to the fundamental monastic life of prayer and manual work, whose chief activity is the singing of the Divine Office in choir—the *opus Dei*. For some years they were gravely handicapped because their chapel, open to the Catholics of the district, consisted of two rooms in their house: this prevented them both from having their proper canonical enclosure and from celebrating the liturgy as adequately as they desired. Accordingly in 1927 an appeal was made for funds to enable them to build a suitable church for themselves, which should be a memorial to Abbess Scholastica and also serve as a parish church for the neighbourhood. The appeal met with a good response and the foundation stone was laid in 1930. The new church was blessed and opened eighteen months later, but has not yet been formally consecrated as there is still a debt upon it. The body

of Dame Scholastica Ewart is in a tomb in a side chapel.

THE POOR CLARES

After the Benedictines the next contemplative women religious to be represented in Wales after the Reformation were the Poor Clares of the Colletine branch. They had had a convent in the English part of the province since 1880, when Mgr. Hedley as vicar capitular had welcomed them to Bullingham, near Hereford. He always greatly valued these nuns, with whom he kept up a lively correspondence, and Father Anselm Wilson quotes a letter to their abbess in 1911 in which he commends the new missions at Caerphilly, Ferndale, and elsewhere to their prayers and says, "I always like to think that the Poor Clares do most of the work in the diocese."

In 1928 Mgr. Vaughan invited the Clares to make a settlement in Menevia, and it was arranged for them to take over a semi-detached house at Flint, in Church Street. On June 30 the abbess of the Notting Hill convent with seven other nuns set out by car from London, and after visiting their sisters at Bullingham and spending several nights with the Benedictines at Talacre they were safely installed on July 4, when the first Mass in the house was celebrated by the parish priest, Father J. P. Geraghty. Mgr. Vaughan came personally to welcome the nuns a week later.

The people of Flint were by no means used to nuns, but their reactions were on the whole friendly; there were many callers to inspect the house before enclosure, and some of them were very prying—but their interest did not begin and end with curiosity: there was much kindness shown from the start, and unsolicited alms in

goods brought to the newcomers. The first extern-sister to go begging "was welcomed by everyone, even the very poor, and was asked to be sure and let them know when she was coming again that they might be certain of being in." One woman, not a Catholic, said that if she had only one loaf "the Poor Clares should have half." The prophecy that the public would object to the singing of the office, especially at night, as a nuisance was abundantly falsified, so much so that on one occasion a zealous constable deemed it his duty to move on the small crowd that had gathered in the road to listen to Matins! The woman who informed her neighbour that, "There you are!—They're praying for you now," was doing a good work.*

But the nuns did not stay long in this incommodious villa at Flint. In 1930 a more suitable house, formerly known as "Aston Bank", standing in its own grounds, was found for them at Hawarden, and there they are now established.

THE CARMELITES

The first Carmelite foundation was made in May 1929, and the place selected by the Bishop in consultation with the Mother Prioress at St. Charles's Square, Notting Hill, was Dolgelley, an account of the subsequent development of Catholicism in which has already been given. A good house called Fron Wnion was found for them, beautifully situated near the foot of Cader Idris and looking out over the town towards the mountains of mid-Merioneth.

It was a bold experiment to plant an enclosed convent in a centre of Nonconformity that had a

* For these and other details see *Pax* No. 88, p. 262 (Prinknash Priory, 1928).

reputation for bigotry and in effect no Catholic population at all. In the event, the reception given to the nuns was mixed. Its prevailing amiability was due in large measure to the efforts of the lady architect who directed the alteration of the house, to the kindly and God-sent interest of a local resident and his wife (who soon after became Catholics), and to the quiet gentleness of the nuns' first chaplain. What difficulties there were arising from personal hostility were mainly fomented by a few bitter spirits who invoked the aid of the Wyclif preachers and other outside influences to stir up the feelings of the majority of Protestants, who were interested, puzzled, and perhaps indignant, but not disposed to interfere. As in other places, a very good impression was made by the convent buildings being thrown open to all comers for a day or so before their enclosure, and very many of the townsfolk took the opportunity to go over them from top to bottom and to talk face to face with the nuns ; there was, in fact, a continuous stream of visitors.

The enclosure was made on May 24 by Cardinal Bourne in person—the first cardinal, so far as is known, ever to visit Dolgelley—in the presence of a large assembly that included very many non-Catholics and at least one Protestant minister. The Bishop of Menevia was supported by his clergy, secular and regular,* and by contingents of the faithful from Holywell, Aberystwyth, and elsewhere, but their devout attention was equalled by the gravity and respect with which the Protestants present listened to the Cardinal's address. With exquisite appreciation of the particular

* Including two Cistercians from Caldey, who were the first monks of their order to pass the threshold of the ruined Cistercian abbey of Cymer, near by, since its dissolution by Henry VIII.

needs and mentality of his unaccustomed Welsh congregation he explained what was being done and why: the importance that Catholics attach to sacred ceremonies because they are acts of worship of Almighty God; the honour apparently paid by them to human individuals and yet really directed to God the Son, whom by divine dispensation they represent; the manifold life of our Lord perpetually carried on in all its activities by and in the Church which he established; in particular, the meaning and function of the contemplative life as perpetuating the prayer and retirement that so characterized Christ in his earthly passage.

The Dolgelley Carmel was the twenty-sixth founded in Great Britain within twenty-five years and within a few weeks Wales had got its second. It is in an even more unexpected place, at Bridell, by Kilgerran, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles out of Cardigan on the Tenby road. The third was opened, or rather enclosed, in the autumn of 1934 at a house quietly situated in a large garden about a mile outside of Llandovery. The foundation of both of these means that local Catholics now have the ministrations of a resident priest, which Cardigan had not had for nine years and Llandovery not at all. Thus do the nuns' prayers for the Church bear immediate fruit in the places where they are called to establish themselves.

In 1903 the Benedictine nuns of the Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Montmartre made a foundation in London which is now known throughout Great Britain as Tyburn Convent. From this foundation others have sprung, among them St. Benedict's Priory at Royston in Hertfordshire, which was

established in December 1916. Now every convent of this congregation contracts a special obligation of devotedness for the conversion of or the good estate of the Church in the country wherein it is established and, though actually in England, that at Royston has the conversion of Wales as a primary "intention" in the office and other intercessions of the nuns. It is fitting that this fact should be mentioned here, both as a contributory factor in the progress of the Church in Wales and because many who have that progress closely at heart are apparently unaware of the existence of a contemplative convent in the middle of England wherein communal prayer is daily sent up to God on behalf of the non-Catholic Welsh.

CHAPTER XV

THE CONVERSION OF WALES

THE history of the Church in Wales during the past hundred years has been pithily summed up by a Catholic priest as "the organization of a non-Welsh mission to strangers within the gates". An indication of how true that is has been given in the previous chapters. It was, and is, a necessary work, a great work, but fundamentally it is part of the general work of the Church in England and touches Wales hardly at all. The "reunion of Wales to the faith of its fathers", understood as the conversion of the Welsh people, is not merely not in sight—it has not been begun. In the past eight years there have been close on 1000 conversions in the whole of the country excluding Glamorgan and Monmouthshire; those two well-populated counties, plus Herefordshire, had an annual average of 453 converts over the three years ending December 31, 1932. These converts are almost all English or of other foreign or mixed blood, and the few genuine Welsh among them are mostly converts on marriage: now "mixed marriages" cut both ways and probably lose at least as many individuals to the Church as they gain. I have before me as I write a list of 306 names taken at random among the Catholics of the diocese of Menevia: 114 are Irish, 164 are other foreigners or doubtful, 28 are Welsh—and of these a number are Irishwomen married to Welsh men, or children of such a union. A similar list from the Cardiff archdiocese has 160 Irish names, 115 English and continental, and only 12 Welsh.

In looking at Wales—and henceforward when I say Wales I mean the Welsh, who are still the dominant element in their own country, even in exploited and wealth-pursuing Glamorgan—the first thing to be grasped from an English point of view is that it is a foreign country, as foreign as France or Ireland, and more foreign than the United States. Or to put it the other, and better way round for my purpose, the English (and Irish) in Wales are foreigners. This was well enough recognized at the time of the troubles in Rome three hundred and fifty years ago. If Dr. Owen Lewis's nephew Huw Griffith complained that the Jesuits "had no skill or experience of our country's state nor of our men's nature", Cardinal Sega reported of Dr. Morris Clynog that he was "native of a country distinct from England, and differing from it in no slight degree as to manners, characteristics, and language," and the historian Dodd emphasizes that the English students realized that "Welsh ideals and methods of religion were different from their own." These things are still true.

Now I am quite aware that to encourage *exclusive* national *particularism* or unnecessary separatism is a crime, it is to aggravate that false unchristian patriotism which Pope Pius XI has stigmatized with the name of *nationalism*. Nevertheless, national differentiations do exist, and an internationalism that would seek so far as possible to reduce all peoples to a uniformity of culture and custom is also a crime: Almighty God has created man in such sort that he displays an infinite variousness of mentality and temperament, whether individual or national, and the resulting variousness of "cultures" is one of the greatest glories of human kind. There are, of course, such things as artificial

nationalities, such as the British or the Polish ; but the English, Welsh, Scots, Poles, Little Russians, are real nationalities—and all different. Of these differences the Catholic Church has always taken cognizance, and respected them as God-given. Therefore I do not apologize for stressing the fact that the Welsh are not a sort of English, that we are foreigners in their land.

The most *obvious* difference between us is that of language. The analyses of the results of the 1931 census which enable us to have a whole and accurate view of the present state of the Welsh language have not yet been published, but certain bare statistics are available. For every 1000 of the population of Wales aged 3 years or more, 90 persons can speak no English and 412 speak both languages ; that means that just over half of 2,593,014 people can speak Welsh, and 23,000 odd of them can speak nothing else. The last figure is a huge drop since 1921, but the number of Welsh-speaking people has increased both in total figures and in proportion to the whole population, which itself has somewhat increased. Of a truth, W. Llewelyn Williams was right : “ How the ancient speech of the Britons, after battling for eighteen centuries against three such powerful languages as Latin, French, and English, has survived at all is a mystery ; the fact that to-day it is more studied, more written, and more read than ever it was before is a miracle.”

These figures and words are calculated to surprise those who imagine Welsh to be a primitive jargon spoken by a rapidly decreasing number of half-illiterate peasants.* It is true that the rural districts are its

* For the general question of the Welsh language, see *Welsh in Education and Life*, the report of a departmental committee appointed by the Board of Education to inquire into the position of the Welsh language and to advise as to its promotion in the educational system of Wales. (H.M. Stationery Office, 1927.)

chief stronghold, but its position is all the more secure for that and the aristocracy of Wales is its small farmers. At the 1921 census the western counties (excluding south Pembroke) all had over 60% of Welsh-speaking people, Denbigh and Montgomery over 45%, Flint, Brecknock, and Glamorgan over 30%, Radnor, Monmouth, and south Pembroke under 10%. But when we look at the density of population we find that Welsh speakers were thickest on the ground, 413 to the square mile, in industrial Glamorgan, Cardiff city, Merthyr, and Swansea—and there are plenty of Catholic priests there, if they are few in Cardiganshire or north Pembroke. The corresponding figures for 1931 are not yet available, but *per 1000 of the population* of three years old and upwards Glamorgan has 305 Welsh-speakers (8 of whom know no English), Anglesey has the most, 874 (239 without English), Brecknock has 372 (20 without English), even the completely anglicized Radnor has 48, easily the lowest figure: the next lowest is Monmouthshire, with 60, all in *urban* areas, and then there is a big jump to Glamorgan and Pembrokeshire, both 305, and the last-named have 40 monoglot Welsh among them.

It is one thing to know a language and another to speak it habitually, and many polygot Welsh usually speak English for one reason or another.* Apart from the 9% throughout the whole country who *can* speak only Welsh, the only statistical guide to those who

* Dr. Griffith Roberts (see p. 21), writing in exile "in the land of Midian", anticipated by two centuries in the preface to his Grammar the type satirized by Jack Glan y Gors as "Dic Sion Dafydd". "You will find some that no sooner see the river Severn, or the clock-towers of Shrewsbury, and hear the Saxon say in his tongue 'Good morrow', than they begin to forget their Welsh and speak it with a foreign accent; their Welsh is englishified and their English, God knows, is too welshy."

usually *do* is a report (c. 1926) of the Central Welsh School Board which informs us that of the children in secondary schools 28% habitually spoke Welsh* (all, of course, knowing English as well), while another 20% or so were learning their language either from their parents or at school or both. In the country districts Welsh is religiously supreme, a tongue that is at the same time hieratic and vernacular, and places of worship are its stronghold in many towns; moreover, of late years the *intelligentzia* is more and more consciously encouraging it and even the anglicized gentry to a certain extent taking it back into use. And even among those who speak English as much as or more than their own tongue it is often found that they prefer Welsh when it is a matter of serious or complex discussion such as religion provides. This is after all only to be expected: the average man of any nationality who lives in another country and masters and uses its tongue will yet prefer his own as a means of expressing his own innermost thoughts and emotions. Those Catholics who maintain that the language question has nothing to do with the conversion of Wales have usually had very little intimate association with the common people; and, quite simply, they are talking nonsense.

It is a fine and fitting gesture that the two bishops of Wales still issue their pastoral letters in Welsh and English, a practice first adopted by Mgr. Mostyn in 1895, even if they are read in only one tongue. But of all the Catholic parochial clergy in Wales less than a dozen bear Welsh names; half a dozen announce that they can hear confessions in Welsh and another

* Varying in detail from 98.4 % at Blaenau Ffestiniog to 0 at Pembroke Dock.

dozen or so can do so. I asked one of these priests, an Englishman in a polygot district, for his views on the language question. "All I know, and need to know, about it is this," he replied. "If I announce a service with any Welsh in it my church is full of Protestants ; when I do not, it is not."

The Welsh nation is predominantly a farming community, they may be called a peasant people, and, as in every country which has a large basic peasant population, this has its effect even on those who live in the watering-places and the industrial areas. A glance at a map will show that the frontier of industrial Glamorgan and Monmouth, from Llanelly to Brynmawr (that city of death) and Newport, marches cheek by jowl with the open agricultural lands of Carmarthenshire, Brecknock, and Monmouthshire, and here and elsewhere there is mutual action and reaction between town and country of a very different sort from the vulgar urbanization of rural folk that goes on in England. Moreover, religiously the dominant farming "class" forms a solid block. Were the whole of urban Wales to turn Catholic to-morrow we might well say that the conversion of the Welsh had begun—but not much more.*

When that grand Irishman the Rev. Dr. Richard Henebry was asked if the Irish people were interested in nature magic and heard the calling of the earth and sea he replied testily, "Drawing-room stuff: cut it out!" There is a temptation to make the same remark when one hears high-falutin' talk about the Welsh, whether from foreigners or from their own

* For some general observations about missionary work among country people may I venture to refer the reader to my article "Roots, and the Conversion of England" in the *Month*, June 1925.

orators. Nevertheless there can be no manner of question but that the characteristic Welshman has an intelligence and often more than rudimentary culture far beyond that of the Englishman, and Welsh culture at large is emphatically diffused, in current jargon "democratic", just as their social outlook is. This is most noticeable in the country but remains true in its measure even amid the corruptions of urban industrialism. Mr. G. K. Chesterton, lingering in the foyer of an American theatre, was accosted familiarly by the chauffeur of his hostess, who asked his opinion of the play, volunteering his own. Mr. Chesterton comments that that could not happen in England. No ; but it could in Wales, any day of the week.

"At the end of the eighteenth century, the *eisteddfod* was revived. Literary societies, such as the Cymmrodorion and the Cymreigyddion, were formed. Thomas Charles started the Sunday schools, where children were taught to read, and adults and children were taught to think—one of the finest educational institutions in the world . . . before ever the State took in hand the education of the people in 1870, the peasants and artisans of Wales had evolved for themselves a means of democratic culture such as no other country in Europe has enjoyed. . . . Islwyn was a preacher ; Ceiriog, who need fear no comparison even with Burns, was a stationmaster ; Dewi Wyn o Eifion was a farmer ; Dewi Wyn o Essyllt a miller ; Hiraethog learnt the rules of Welsh prosody while tending his father's sheep on the mountain-side at Llansannan, Watcyn Wyn while working underground in a coal-pit ; Eben Fardd was a weaver ; Telynog earned his living before the mast when still a child, and during the last four years of his all too short life he worked

as a collier at Aberdare ; Daniel Owen, our national novelist, was a tailor ; Thomas Stephens, one of the sanest critics and one of the most erudite Welsh scholars of the last century, was a chemist. . . . Myrddin, who is a blacksmith by trade, has devoted his life to collecting Welsh books and documents, and has also published excellent volumes on the 'Folklore' and the 'Dialect words' (*gwerin-eiriau*) of Carnarvonshire, and on 'Welsh place-names' . . . The same thing is true of the whole of Welsh national life. . . . And the young school of Welsh poets, a nest of singing birds, bids fair to rival and perhaps to surpass the glories of the past" (Williams, in *The Making of Modern Wales*).

And it must be emphasized that this is not confined to country folk. Cwm Rhondda may get wildly excited about (why shouldn't it?) and waste a lot of money on (which is a pity) football and "the dogs" and "the pictures" and boxing and betting, it may fill its public halls for Miners' Federation meetings and demonstrations, non-unionist, strike, and lock-out meetings, but it fills those same halls as full and fuller for "singing festivals, Shakespearean festivals, *eisteddfodau*, oratorios, operas, drama, go-as-you-please competitions, Drama Week competitions, celebrity concerts", and the personnel of the audiences and participants overlaps a long way.

Any Catholic who has been privileged to be present in some small packed school-room in the hills at a *pennillion*-singing competition, and listened for three hours to farmers and their wives and sons and daughters and labourers and the inn-keeper (if any) and the shop-people from the villages round about, come out by car or special bus or on foot, vying with one another in singing this difficult musical form, in

verses often written by themselves,* such a one realizes very acutely the significance of the cultural aspect of Catholicism, both as an encouragement and as a deterrent, where the Welsh people are concerned. All that is best in their culture is bound up with their own language—but that still leaves, especially in the towns, a great deal that is not. Granted that the “Elijah” and “St. Paul” and “Hymn of Praise” are far too popular, and that the horrors of “operatic stuff” and *bel canto* have wrought havoc in Welsh music, still, on hearing those glorious hymns gloriously sung, “Crug-y-bar” and “Aberystwyth” and “Moriah” and “Joanna” and “Ton y Botel” (called “Ebenezer” in the hymn-books) and the rest, one is disturbed in mind as well as deeply moved in spirit. For this hymn-singing is not “only artistic” or “merely emotional”—it is a religious act with a definite religious significance. One longs for another St. Ephrem the Syrian, a “harp of the Holy Ghost”.

In his excellent book *Rhondda Roundabout*, Jack Jones† makes the Communist Dai Hippo say: “Singing and composing is the Rhondda’s most pernicious disease, though it’s not near as bad here now as it used to be; still, it’s bad enough now, God knows.

* “Pennillion chaunting . . . consists in singing stanzas, either attached or detached, of various lengths and metre, to any tune which the harper may play [but not to the same notes; the singing is something ‘set’ upon the harp-music to suit best, according to recognized rules, the independent purpose of the singer]; for it is irregular, and in fact not allowable, for any particular one to be chosen. Two, three, or four bars having been played, the singer takes it up, and this is done according as the pennill, or stanza, may suit—he must end precisely with the strain, he therefore commences in any part he may please. To the stranger it has the appearance of beginning in the middle of a line or verse, but which is not the case. Different tunes require a different number of verses to complete it. . .” (Leathart: *Welsh Pennillion*. London, 1825.)

† What a joke it would be to shut Mr. Jones up in a small room with Caradog Evans to fight it out!

. . . Put 'em in a God-box with somebody to play the organ for 'em and they're happy. . . ."

"Why," objects the Communist 'big noise' from London, "I'm given to understand that the people here seldom go to those places nowadays."

"Don't you believe it. Anyway, whether they go or not, that's where the Rhondda people's roots are. Right in the God-boxes. . . ."

Whether they go or not, that's where the roots of the Welsh at large are, in the chapels—in Moriah and Carmel and Bethesda and Beulah and Mizpah and Caersalem.

Too much has been made of the "decay of Nonconformity" on a basis of chapel attendance. And it is well for us that things are not, and are unlikely to be, so bad as they look. There is a pernicious idea among some Catholics that the disintegration of non-Catholic Christianity, whether of Protestantism in Great Britain or of Eastern Orthodoxy in Russia, clears the ground for the wholesale acceptance of the integral and plenary Christianity of the Catholic Church. It does not; it makes it infinitely harder. The decay of non-Catholic Christianity means that people are deserting not simply their churches and sects but the person of Jesus Christ as well; whereas it is the office of the Catholic Church to rally people to Christ, to the whole Christ. Is it better—from any point of view—for non-Catholic people to ignore, even despise, Christ, or to love him and believe in him?

The religion of the Welsh is Nonconformity, dissent from the official Church of England. The disestablishment of that church in Wales and its present emphasis on its Welsh aspect has somewhat changed the attitude of the people towards it, but the slow emergence of an

“ Anglo-Catholic movement ” within it is not increasing its appeal. To the outside observer the episcopal Church of Wales seems not quite naturalized—in the same way, though in a very far less degree, as the Catholic Church is not yet naturalized there.

It is extremely difficult for a foreigner and outsider to estimate the present state of Welsh Nonconformity. The following notes are based on personal observation and on the views of a talented Calvinistic Methodist minister of wide experience, sometimes in his own words.

In general it appears to be untrue that the Protestant churches are losing a great deal of their hold, especially in the younger generation, though there is certainly a huge neglect of divine worship in the towns. But “ the younger generation attends the Sunday-schools in larger numbers than do the middle-aged and the old. As I move among them I find there is a wistful desire for better times in religion. I am old enough to remember the great revival of religion in 1904 and the following year. Many complained that our young people were negligent before that time ; but when the revival came they flocked to the churches and joined heartily in the great movement that transformed every phase of religious activity.” Those “ poky Nonconformist chapels ” that a long line of superior novelists has sneered at, and sometimes traduced, may not be as full as of yore ; but it is to be remembered that they have a large number of services of one sort or another, and that very many who rarely go near them willingly support them in other ways.

There is rivalry, not always good-tempered and edifying, between the chapels of various denominations, but it is traditional and social rather than theological,

and the great division between Calvinist and Arminian is obliterated. "The former stressed the divine side of Salvation and the other the duty of man. It has been realized that both are true. Disputes have died down and all churches are much more united in their survey of the truth of the holy Scriptures. We all read the same portions of scripture in the Sunday-schools, but it is a fact that we all have our separate commentaries." The older sort of "fundamentalism" (Tennessee model) is being very generally discarded, and many, perhaps most, ministers hold views on biblical criticism acceptable to Catholics ; but there are not wanting those who go much further, and still a number who would not go so far.

Nor is it entirely true to say that at present the power of the Protestant churches is more social than religious and moral. "I find that the preaching of the gospel of our Lord has a greater influence than anything today. It attracts a greater number than any social event, though we give much attention to the social side. The Church is a society of believers who have a common relationship with the Lord." Nevertheless, the chapels do exercise a strong social influence, sometimes, from a Catholic point of view, superfluously and tyrannically, even irreligiously ; but that too has been exaggerated—a more accurate picture of ministers and deacons can be got from Jack Jones than from Caradog Evans. Nevertheless, to overlook or deny the strong element of "smug respectability, a long face, and a big black book on Sunday, and teetotalism *where you are known*" is as wrong as to exaggerate it. There is plenty of perverted religion and so hypocrisy among the Non-conformists—but among whom is there not ?

The Welsh are a very religious people and at present

and *subjectively* Protestantism seems still capable of supplying their religious needs: as with us, if they "make a bad show" it is they who are to blame, not their religion, which contains so much Christian truth. But as Catholics we know that their religion is also at fault and that objectively it can never satisfy them; the gospel of Christ so faithfully preached from so many pulpits is not the whole gospel, the Christ still so beloved and trusted is not the whole Christ.

But if we know little, far too little, about their religion and religious life, they know even less about ours.* Most of the old calumnies and misunderstandings about Catholicism are still current in Wales, especially in the rural districts, with the addition of some preposterous ideas that I've never heard anywhere else. Added to this disability there are certain accidental features of the Church in their country which make it extraordinarily difficult for the Welsh even to consider her seriously in relation to themselves. The chief of these is that she is a "foreign church".

The very idea of universality forbids completely separate national churches and a Catholic will receive the ministry of the sacraments and of the word from a priest of any nationality. Nevertheless, the time has gone by, whether for better or worse, when a Lombard can occupy the first see in England, a Welshman be a diocesan bishop in Italy, or a Gloucestershire man

* Mr. Jones gives us an illuminating glimpse in *Rhondda Roundabout*. The Rev. Dan Price, B.A., Beulah, watches a procession of girls in a Catholic orphanage at Cardiff. ". . . he stood thinking of the immense power of Catholicism in the religious and social life of the peoples of the earth, and, after seeing that procession of girls, a mere handful of the many thousands Catholicism was caring for in that and other ways, he felt less inclined than ever to regard Catholicism as the evil power he had been taught as a child to believe it was."

become archbishop of Rheims ; not only that, but all the energies of the Church's missionary organization are bent towards furnishing an indigenous clergy even in non-Christian countries, the wilds of Africa as well as long-civilized India and China. We must therefore have much sympathy for this difficulty of the Welsh. They see the Catholic Church as " foreign " to them, specifically, as Irish : I have heard Catholicism called " the Irish religion " more than once or twice.

Now, however regretfully, it must be quite clearly recognized that the Irish are—to put it mildly—not in good odour in Wales. The antagonism goes back a century, to before the Irish famine, and may even have its roots long before that. Mgr. Hedley had no illusions about the position. He knew that " a national movement towards the Catholic religion [was] nearly as unthinkable in South Wales as it would be in Turkey. The antagonism between Welsh and Irish, between Protestant Nonconformity and Catholicity, was too acute to allow of any national fusion for many years " (Wilson). That was in 1895, and both are less acute to-day. But the bad blood and misunderstandings and the personal dislike of so many Welsh for the Irish engendered at the time of the big immigrations (aggravated by roving bands of Irish harvesters) spread throughout the country and have persisted to this day : in places far removed from the direct influence and problems of the industrial areas it can be heard said when one man treats another meanly, *Dyna hen das Gwyddel*, " That is an old Irish trick," or of a disunited and quarrelsome family, *Mae nhw yn byw fel Gwyddelod*, " They live like Irish people ". These sayings may represent a truth no more and no less than " Taffy was a Welshman, Taffy was a thief ", but the point is that

they are current and believed.* The "Irish church" is therefore badly handicapped from the start, and its other chief element being the equally foreign English does nothing to help matters.† Just as by hot-heads in Ireland, we are held responsible by many for all the ills of Wales—possibly with even more reason, but I don't know. What I do know is that the arrogance and ill behaviour of large numbers of English visitors to Wales, the attitude of "Why the devil don't you speak English instead of this silly noise" and of "Why shouldn't we play golf on your links on Sundays if we want to," are calculated to make us neither liked nor respected.

This brief and most imperfect summary of a most complicated situation may be best finished by quoting *verbatim* the experience of an English priest who has a church and convent in a small Welsh country town :

"In my experience the Welsh, while hungering for the things of God, have a growing distrust of organized religion. They are also deeply imbued with a terror of Catholicism, partly owing to old-fashioned prejudice, partly because it is unknown. They are like rabbits in a field : if you sit still enough for long enough they will come and play round you, but if you move . . . !

A further dread is of public opinion. If people are

* Nor is an unfavourable view of the Irish confined to the common people. I have before me a letter from a Welshman, who was a scholar and a Catholic ; he writes *à propos* of earlier Irish activity in Wales : "As they generally behaved with their national manner of bullying the weak and cringing to the strong they were not received with rapturous enthusiasm." That doesn't seem to be a very sound judgement : but again the point is that it represents a common view.

† Just imagine an English minister who should turn up in an Irish speaking village in Ireland and try and convert its inhabitants to Protestantism—it's rather like that.

suspected of 'leanings' their acquaintance come and say to them, 'I do hope you are not joining the Catholics,' but if challenged can give no reason.

The story has gone forth that Catholics do not worship Christ but the Virgin Mary. This idea is very widely disseminated, and does us untold harm, for the Welsh people have a real love for our Lord as God.

There is no *real* hostility to the Catholic religion, and it is chiefly ignorance that keeps the people away. Bitterness is found in the semi-educated classes because it is from them that the deacons of the chapels are recruited and they fear the loss of their social prestige.

My converts so far are mainly from the class which has no social standing and therefore nothing to lose.

Another difficulty in country places is that everybody for miles and miles around knows everybody else, together with all their private affairs, so that a conversion is immediately broadcast throughout the county. Of course later on this will be an advantage, since when 'everybody's doing it now' one will encourage the others, but at present it takes some courage to set a fashion.

Those people who have travelled are far more sympathetic than those who have never left their native fastnesses; but toleration so often broadens into 'modernism'.

Every month I have the Stations and the vernacular parts of Benediction in Welsh. Last night at least three children of intelligent age stood with their heads round the corner of the door, and listened right through to the end. This is very typical. If they feel that they are not compromising themselves, everybody in town loves to go to a Catholic service: a clothing, the midnight Mass, the harvest festival,

are all accounted more a social function, and therefore non-committal. You may remember half the town was at the public hall last August,* and about 300 people were present at the outdoor procession and sermon for Corpus Christi this year. Also very typical: Except while the crib is up, it is very rare for a townsman, other than one of our own, to open the church door; but if the door is left open, any number will peep in, and sometimes, very daring, even walk in and look round. They are a cautious people and want to know before they do anything definite.

It is too soon to speak definitely, but my real Welsh converts seem more satisfactory than the half-and-half Welsh and English or, more particularly Irish."

To this it is not out of place to add my own experience of the Welsh people personally—indeed, piety to my former neighbours calls for it. That ruthless moral fervour that makes us English so beloved has long ago given an unattractive character to the Welsh. During a residence of nearly twenty years in Dyfed, the sleeve of Gwent, Ardudwy, and Cyfeiliog, among English-speakers and among Welsh-speakers, *but always among country folk only*, I have been unable to confirm that unfavourable judgement. The faults of the Welsh are much the same as those of other people, and they are not oblivious of them. On the other hand, I have always found them kind and hospitable to a degree, courteous, unapproachable at first but warm-hearted and welcoming when they get to know you, suspicious and secretive towards strangers until they have discovered whether or no he be hostile or a patronizer,

* At a confirmation. His church being very small the enterprising pastor hired the town hall, *pour encourager les autres*.

class-distinction is foreign to their nature and their social order—except among those who are anglicized, doctors and solicitors and so on send their children to the State schools, your tobacconist neither slaps you on the back nor calls you “sir”—and the broad virtue of neighbourliness is esteemed above all others.

Lay people can do a great work of “Catholic action” in Wales ; by faithfully practising their own religion, by a courteous understanding and consideration for the religion of their neighbours, and by demonstrating by word and deed that the Catholic Church has the greatest respect for national cultures and customs and for legitimate patriotic aspirations in their regard. For a long, long time yet it will be a matter of “clearing the ground” where the Welsh are concerned, of enabling them to get a better understanding of ourselves as foreigners and of our universal religion. For the rest, “the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.”

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

HIERARCHICAL TABLE OF THE CHURCH IN WALES

FOURTH TO TWELFTH CENTURIES

Bishops without delimited dioceses, usually associated with monasteries; those at *Mynyw* (south-west), in *Erging* (south-east), and at *Bangor in Arfon* (north) became of special importance. *Mynyw* is said to have had a primacy of honour as the church of St. David.

c. 1100 TO 1585

The bishops of *Saint Davids*, *Bangor*, *Llandaff*, and *Saint Asaph*, suffragans of Canterbury.

1598-1623

The ARCHPRESBYTERATE OF ENGLAND AND WALES

1623-1688

The VICARIATE APOSTOLIC OF ENGLAND AND WALES

1688-1840

The VICARIATE APOSTOLIC OF THE WESTERN DISTRICT

Vicars Apostolic ·

1688. *Philip Michael Ellis*, o.s.b., Bishop of Aureliopolis *in partibus infidelium*. Resigned 1705. Died 1726.

1715. *Matthew Prichard*, o.s.f., Bishop of Myra *i.p.i.*

1750. *Lawrence William York*, o.s.b., Bishop of Nisibis *i.p.i.*

1770. *Charles Walmesley*, o.s.b., Bishop of Ramatha *i.p.i.*

1797. *William Gregory Sharrock*, o.s.b., Bishop of Telmessus *i.p.i.*

1809. *Peter Bernardine Collingridge*, o.s.f., Bishop of Thespiæ *i.p.i.*

1829. *Peter Augustine Baines*, o.s.b., Bishop of Siga *i.p.i.*

1840-1850

The VICARIATE APOSTOLIC OF THE WELSH DISTRICT

1840. *Thomas Joseph Brown*, o.s.b., Bishop of Apollonia
i.p.i.

1850-1895

Seven southern counties in the DIOCESE OF NEWPORT
AND MENEVIA. Bishops :1850. The said *T. J. Brown*, o.s.b.1881. *John Cuthbert Hedley*, o.s.b.Six northern counties in the DIOCESE OF SHREWSBURY.
Bishops :1851. *James Brown*.1882. *Edmund Knight*.

1895-1898

i. Monmouth and Glamorgan in the DIOCESE OF NEW-
PORT. Bishop : the said *J. C. Hedley*, o.s.b.ii. All Wales except Monmouth and Glamorgan in the
VICARIATE APOSTOLIC OF WALES. Vicar apostolic : *Francis
Mostyn*, titular Bishop of Ascalon.

1898-1916

i. As before. The bishop, Mgr. Hedley, died in 1915.

ii. The DIOCESE OF MENEVIA. Bishop : the said *Francis
Mostyn*. In 1911 both dioceses became suffragan to Bir-
mingham instead of Westminster.

1916-

THE PROVINCE OF WALES

i. The ARCHDIOCESE OF CARDIFF. Archbishops :

1916. *James Romanus Bilborrow*, o.s.b.1921. *Francis Mostyn*.

ii. As before but now suffragan to Cardiff. Bishops :

1916. The said *Francis Mostyn*.

1921. Vacant.

1926. *Francis John Vaughan*.

APPENDIX II

VARIATIONS PROPER TO WALES IN THE KALENDAR OF THE
WESTERN CHURCH

ARCHDIOCESE OF CARDIFF

- Feb. 1. *St. Ffraid* (Brigid), virgin. d.
 „ 9. *St. Teilo*, bishop. d.
 March 1. *St. David*, bishop, patron of Wales. d. 1 cl.
 with oct.
 „ 2, 3, 5. Of the octave. s.d.
 „ 8. Octave of *St. David*. g.d.
 May 4. *The Martyrs of England and Wales*. g.d.
 „ 20. *St. Ethelbert*, king and martyr. d.
 „ 24. *Dedication of the Cathedral Church*. d. 1 cl. with
 oct.
 „ 28, 30. Of the octave. s.d.
 „ 31. Octave of the Dedication. g.d.
 June 22. *St. Alban*, protomartyr of Britain. g.d.
 July 3. *SS. Julius and Aaron*, martyrs. d.
 „ 28. *St. Samson*, bishop. d.
 „ 30. *BB. Edward* (Powel) *and Richard* (Fetherston),
 martyrs. d.
 „ 31. *St. Germanus*, bishop. d.
 Sept. 25. *St. Cadog*, bishop and martyr(!). d.
 Oct. 5. *St. Thomas of Hereford*, bishop. d.
 Nov. 5. *All Saints whose Relics are preserved in the*
 diocese. g.d.
 „ 6. *St. Illtyd*, abbot. d.
 „ 14. *St. Dyfrig* (Dubricius), bishop. d.
 Dec. 5. *St. Lucius*, king and martyr(!). d.

DIOCESE OF MENEVIA

- Jan. 14. *St. Cyndeyrn* (Kentigern), bishop. d.
 Feb. 1. *St. Ffraid* (Brigid), virgin. d.
 March 1. *St. David*, bishop, patron of Wales. g.d.
 „ 2, 3, 5. Of the octave. s.d.
 „ 8. Octave of *St. David*. g.d.

April	21.	<i>St. Beuno</i> , bishop. com.
May	4.	<i>The Martyrs of England and Wales</i> . g.d.
„	11.	<i>St. Asaph</i> , bishop. d.
„	24.	<i>Our Lady, Help of Christians</i> , patroness of the diocese. d. 1 cl. with oct.
„	28, 30.	Of the octave. s.d.
„	31.	Octave of our Lady. g.d.
June	22.	<i>St. Alban</i> , protomartyr of Britain. g.d.
July	30.	<i>BB. Edward and Richard</i> , martyrs. d.
Aug.	11.	<i>St. Germanus</i> , bishop. d.
Sept.	11.	<i>St. Deiniol</i> , bishop. d.
„	15.	<i>Our Lady of Seven Sorrows</i> , titular of the pro-cathedral. d. 1 cl. with com. oct.
„	22.	Octave of our Lady. g.d.
„	25.	<i>St. Cadog</i> , bishop and martyr. d.
Nov.	3.	<i>St. Gwenfrewi</i> (Winefride), virgin and martyr. g.d.
„	5.	<i>All Saints whose Relics are preserved in the diocese</i> . g.d.
„	7.	<i>Dedication of the Pro-cathedral Church</i> . d. 1 cl. with oct.
„	14.	Octave of the Dedication. g.d.

Welsh and other saints traditionally venerated locally are fairly well represented in the dedications of churches, distributed as follows: *St. David* 8 dedications, *St. Winefride* 6, *St. Michael* 6 (Wales is covered with *Llanfihangels*: *Mihangel*=*Michael*), *St. Illtyd* 3, *St. Helen* 3 (see footnote, p. 103), *St. Alban* 2, *St. Teilo* 2, *St. Tudwal* 2, with *SS. Julius and Aaron*, *Gwladys*, *Dyfrig*, *Samson*, and *Bride* (*Ffraid*), 1 each. Some of these and other Welsh saints are also commemorated in the dedications of convents and other institutions and in the names of deaneries.

APPENDIX III

STATISTICS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN WALES ON
JANUARY 1, 1935

	Cardiff*	Menevia	Total
Clergy } secular . . .	103	58	161
} regular . . .	46	81	127†
Public churches and chapels	106	72	178
Convents	21	20	41
Secondary schools . . .	13	12	25
" " pupils	834	278	1,112
Elementary schools . .	47	18	65
" " pupils	15,751	3,924	19,675
Total population (1931)	1,772,289	932,480	2,704,769
Total of Catholics . .	87,987	15,324	103,311
Baptisms in 1933 . . .	2,453	350	2,803
Marriages in "	1,030	225	1,255
Conversions "	409	104	513

* The Cardiff figures include Herefordshire.

† About half of these (mostly in Menevia) are not engaged in parochial work.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- The Benedictines of Talacre.* (Exeter, n.d.).
- The Catholic Record Society. *Transactions.* Volumes I, II, III, IV, VI, VII, IX, XII, XXII, XXVII.
- Cennad Catholig Cymru.* (Llanrwst, 1910-13).
- Edwards, N: *The Industrial Revolution in South Wales.* (London, 1924).
- Edwards, O: *Wales.* (London, 1901).
- Ellis: *The Catholic Church in the Welsh Laws.* (London, 1930).
- Ellis: *The Catholic Martyrs of Wales.* (London, 1932).
- Foley: *Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus.* 8 vols. (London, 1877-83).
- Gillow: *Biographical Dictionary of English Catholics.* 6 vols. (London, 1885).
- The Catholic Directory,* annually from 1837.
- Glancey: *Catholic Directory for the Province of Birmingham.* (Birmingham, 1913-14-15).
- Gwilym: *The History of Pantasaph.* (Pantasaph, n.d.).
- Hirsch-Davies: *Catholicism in Mediæval Wales.* (London, 1916).
- Hunter-Blair: *John Patrick Third Marquess of Bute.* (London, 1921).
- Lloyd: *A History of Wales . . . to the Edwardian Conquest.* 2 vols. (London, 1912).
- Mathew: *The Celtic Peoples and Renaissance Europe.* (London, 1933).
- Matthews: *The Vaughans of Courtfield.* (London, 1912).
- Metcalf: *Life of St. Winefride.* (London, 1917).
- St. Peter's Magazine.* (Cardiff, various issues).

- Snead-Cox : *The Life of Cardinal Vaughan*. (London, 1934).
- Wade-Evans : *Welsh Christian Origins*. (Oxford, 1934).
- William : *The Story of the Capuchin Franciscans in England*. (Pantasaph, 1924).
- Williams : *The Making of Modern Wales*. (London, 1919).
- Wilson : *The Life of Bishop Hedley*. (London, 1930).

BX

1509

.A8

Attwater

5-25-45

The Catholic church

in modern Wales:

1514498

OCT 4 - 1953

Went 306

Boorstin

Pac mba

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



44 750 983

BX1509
.A8

1514498